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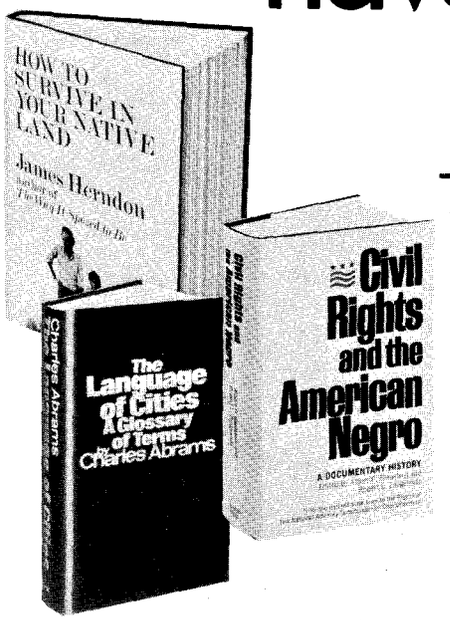
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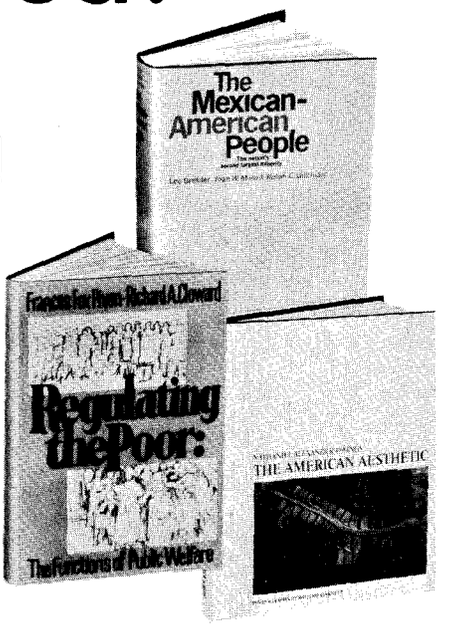

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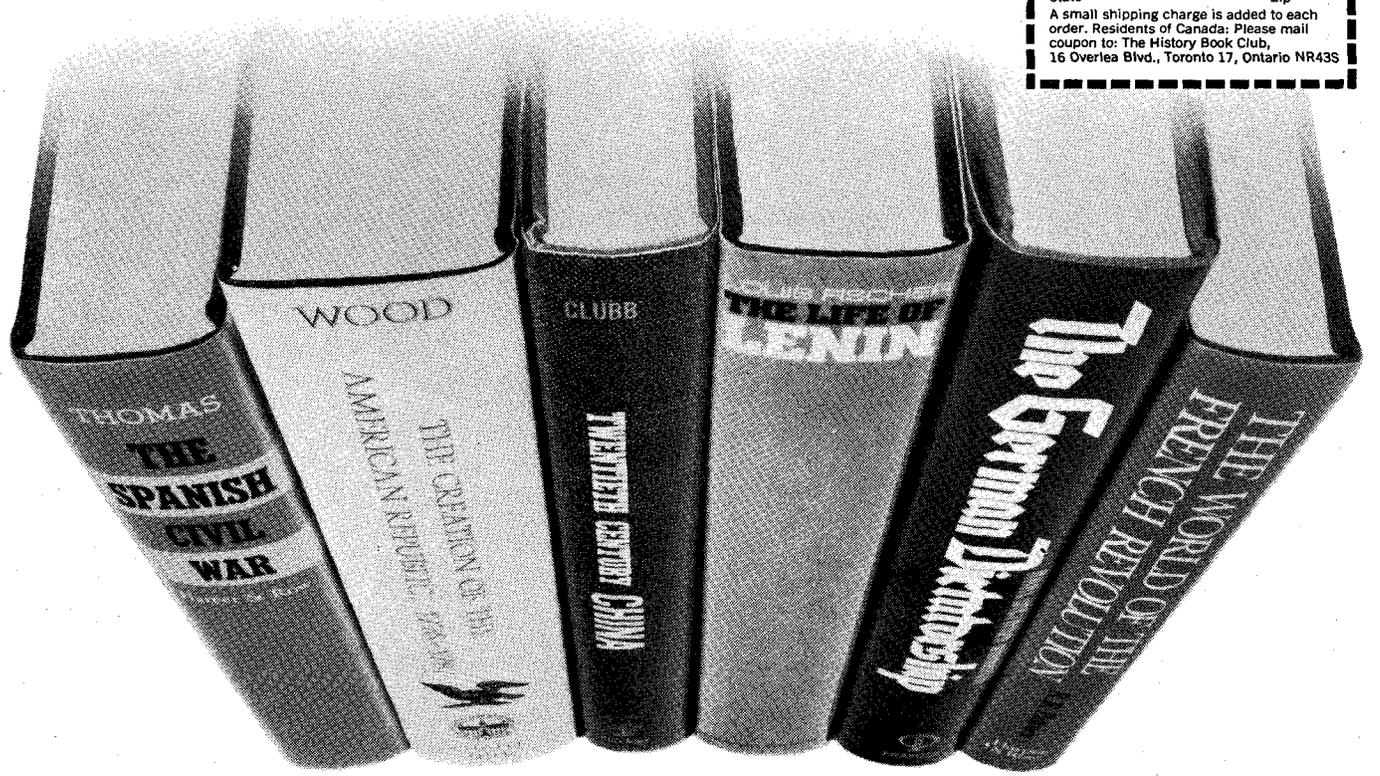

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Sleight of Hand

He doesn't have a suite with an outer office. He doesn't have a secretary. He doesn't have a car. At 37, he doesn't even have a wife. He is Ombudsman, dedicated and self-appointed, to the American people. Yes, Ralph Nader – son of Lebanese immigrants; he now has another little job on his hands, to stop a tax grab of $30 billion. But it is a special kind of giveaway, engineered by the Nixon administration itself. It has overtones more important than the money. They involve a constitutional point: who has the right to levy and collect taxes, anyway? Congress or the White House? And there is another point likely to go right up to the Supreme Court: the right of the little man to have "standing" in a court. Traditionally you can't bring a suit – you don't have standing – unless you have a direct, economic or similar stake in an issue, not even if you are a taxpayer and you think the government is preparing illegally to give away some of your money. Recently courts have broadened this idea of standing. Now the thing will have a bigger test. Ralph Nader, and John Gardner's *Common Cause*, and a consortium of other hard-headed idealists have had the impertinence to bring suit against the United States Treasury.

Laughable, eh? That's the way General Motors felt when Ralph Nader first took out after it. He was just a whipper-snapper from Princeton and Harvard Law School, and had written his book in 1965 *Unsafe At Any Speed*. GM feels differently now. GM is the world's largest industrial corporation. Its annual revenue is greater than that of any foreign country save USSR and UK. It has around 750,000 employees and it hired as one of them a detective to investigate Nader's private life when he began to get difficult. Result: out-of-court damage settlement to Nader in 1970 of $425,000. And Nader has brought the whole damn auto industry under government regulation. Also he has got major changes in meat inspection, in health, in federal regulatory agencies, and is even trying to get the government to do something about enforcing its laws on coal-mine safety.

Well, so now we come to the big new chapter. The subject is so crashingly dull that just to mention it is a switch-off phrase, so I will try to creep up on it. I am closely associated with two boys, nine and seven, who have recently been given a new walkie-talkie. What is the life expectancy of the outfit? With the judgment of sad experience I would base the rate of depreciation for tax purposes at about five days. And now that we have got into depreciation, the government has guidelines for the assets of 50 groups ranging down from gas and electricity transmission – 30 years; railways – 14; mining – 10; aerospace – 8. As assets depreciate, taxes fall under these complicated guidelines, and steel plants are like walkie-talkies.

Now we come to the Laguna Beach, California, press briefing last January 11. The White House reporters who travel with Mr. Nixon are a long way from home; they are not specialists on technical subjects and the sources on whom they rely are back in Washington. Mr. Nixon's press secretary Ron Ziegler arrived about 12:20 p.m. with Under Secretary of the Treasury Walker (the bane of linotype men because he spells his first name "Charls"), and John Nolan, deputy assistant secretary. They had a statement from Mr. Nixon saying that he had "approved three important changes in the administration of the depreciation provisions of the tax laws. . . ." The bored reporters said, "My, My!" They mostly couldn't understand it. It was about "faster depreciation allowance" or something. And all this dry-as-dust announcement really meant was a tax bonus to big business of something over $3 billion a year for 10 years, or a total of around $37 billion. It was created by executive fiat, like the Vietnam war, without recourse to Congress, in one of the biggest giveaways to be proposed in recent history.

Mr. Nixon was allowing companies to depreciate their assets for tax purposes over a period shorter by as much as 20 percent over the old 1962 guidelines. It was like telling the two small boys that a reasonable useful life expectancy of their walkie-talkie was four days and not five and there would be no reprimands if they made it go that long.

Ralph Nader was en route to Japan when this happened. But he has a garrison of permanent Nader's Raiders in Washington, mostly fresh out of law school and with a controlled zest for the public interest surpassing that of a Wall Street tax lawyer drooling for a half-million-dollar fee. So Tom Stanton (who gets paid by Nader $4500), and his colleague Sam Simon, on their own initiative immediately filed suit the same day, January 11, pointing out that the Treasury had said nothing about public hearings which are required by law. The Treasury caught its breath, coughed, and said it had merely forgotten to mention them. It was the first of several coincidences.

Mr. Nixon, in his original statement, said that it was "essentially a change in the timing" and Treasury Secretary Kennedy said it just meant a "postponement" of tax payment. "These statements are false," observed Northwestern University tax expert Robert Eisner at the subsequent hearing. Senator Muskie released a confidential memo from John Nolan (like a small Pentagon Paper) warning his bosses that the big tax giveaway might be illegal without consulting Congress. Nolan quickly said that he had changed his mind. It was also shown that last September a presidential task force, led by a former member of the Nixon-Mitchell Wall Street law firm, explicitly said that congressional action would be needed.

Last week Nader and Common Cause, and a group of carefully chosen plaintiffs, filed suit here to block fast depreciation. The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, for example, claims it has legal "standing" because it competes with private utilities who get the rake-off. Economists like Walter Heller say the rebate won't help the recovery because the boost will come too late. A big tax loophole for business means that others must pay more taxes. That was the argument Mr. Nixon used in vetoing the school bill a year ago; he called it "painful, but necessary" to save taxes. It was peanuts compared to this, only $453 million.

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Nixon's Chance To End the War

Our resistance war against the French lasted nearly nine years. But after the settlement of the war and the restoration of peace, there was no obstacle to the building of friendly relations between the Vietnamese people and the French people. I believe it's the same way with the American people.

– Le Duc Tho, Hanoi spokesman in Paris

An opportunity has again been given the US government to negotiate an honorable end of the war. We will soon know whether Mr. Nixon intends to take it. The Vietcong peace proposal of July 1 is a well-considered document. It is no demand for unconditional surrender, no defiant assertion of the right of insurgents to dictate the form and composition of a new government in Saigon. Nor is it put forward on a take-it-or-leave-it basis: for example, those parts of it dealing with US military withdrawal and the accompanying release of war prisoners appear to be separable from the political accommodations. The initial White House response was guarded, as was to be expected. It was also, in part, irrelevant. For while he acknowledged some "positive, as well as clearly unacceptable elements" in the plan, the President's press secretary felt obliged to add that we could not of course accept any "arrangement that would turn the 17 million people of [South] Vietnam over to the communists."

How did the government of the United States come to accept as fact, this fiction that America has the power (and the right) to deliver Vietnam into the hands of some Vietnamese and deny it to others? Even assuming, and it is a very large assumption, our manifest destiny to save the Vietnamese from themselves (what Dean Acheson, in another context, called "messianic globaloney"), what fine and sure calculation convinced successive Presidents that the Vietnamese would be happier, freer, friendlier, richer if they were governed by Thieu and Ky rather than their adversaries? Secretary of Defense McNamara knew in 1966 that the war "must be fought and won by the Vietnamese themselves." Why then did he not recommend we let them do it? It was the key question, and judging from the evidence in the Pentagon Papers, he did not ask it. Instead, he sought answers to the lesser, nuts-and-bolts question: how can we get "our Vietnamese" to fight better?

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And he concluded, sadly, that "as was the case in 1961 and 1963 and 1965, we have not found the formula, the catalyst, for training and inspiring them into effective action." We have not found it yet.

Throughout the 47 volumes of the Pentagon Papers, it is also taken for granted by most of the men of influence that South Vietnam could and must be held as a beachhead of anticommunism, and that if it were not, the vast Pacific, in the words of Vice President Lyndon Johnson, "becomes a Red Sea." For nearly a decade, that was official doctrine. "The battle against communism must be joined in Southeast Asia with strength and determination to achieve success there," Mr. Johnson advised President Kennedy, "or the US, inevitably, must surrender the Pacific and take up our defenses on our own shores." One searches the memos and cables for some more realistic perception that an altogether different policy, one of neutrality toward this distant and long-fought civil war, would be wiser, would spare us the needless waste of lives, dollars, and public confidence in the processes of government. Nowhere, early enough, were Presidential advisers saying that nonintervention would put the US in a stronger, less compromised position than intervention – though ironically, that is precisely the policy Washington did follow in its relations with Cuba after the Bay of Pigs invasion. The Vietnam documents are depressingly evocative of earlier debates about China and who "lost" it – again, as if China had been America's to lose, and as if "our" Chinese, having been defeated, the US itself had been defeated. "What course Chinese communism might have taken if an American connection [with Mao] had been brought to bear," Barbara Tuchman comments in her study, *Stillwell and the American Experience in China*, "is a question that lost opportunities have made forever unanswerable. The only certainty is that it could not have been worse." And so with Vietnam.

The July 1 proposal can be looked at in terms of what it requires the US to do, and what it pledges the other side to do. The US is asked to set a terminal date for total military withdrawal, to stop intervening in Vietnamese politics (on the side of Thieu and his entourage), and to allow the formation by "the political, social and religious forces in South Vietnam aspiring to peace and national concord" of an interim administration favoring "independence, neutrality and democracy." Finally, the US would be expected to take "full responsibility for the losses and destruction it has caused the Vietnamese people in the two zones." What that means in dollars and cents is one of many questions left for precise negotiation. It need not be an insurmountable barrier to a settlement, if we keep in mind Lyndon Johnson's pledge of US aid to Vietnam after the cessation of hostilities, or our earlier participation in the economic reconstruction of post-war Germany and Japan.

For its part, the other side promises to release all US prisoners of war (and if the US withdraws militarily by the end of this year, all prisoners would be released by that date). It would assure a safe exit for our troops, a cease-fire, the prevention of "all acts of terror, reprisal, and discrimination against persons having collaborated with one or the other party." Political prisoners will be freed. People will be permitted to return to their homes. At some unspecified time, free elections in the South will be held. Normal relations between North and South will be reestablished, with "free movement, free correspondence, free choice of residence. . . ." Neither zone will join "any military alliance with foreign countries," or allow "any foreign country to have military bases, troops, and military personnel on their soil." Ultimate reunification of the two zones of Vietnam is contemplated "on the basis of discussions and agreements . . . without constraint and annexation from either party."

A negotiated peace has always been the only alternative to indefinite continuation of the conflict. Vietnamization was never anything other than a euphemism for war by proxy, in which the United States would retain custodial, though not combat responsibility for the South. It is one of the merits of the July 1 proposal that it saves face all around, meeting the requirement set by the late John McNaughton, then Assistant Secretary of Defense, who wrote in 1966 that "the present US objective in Vietnam is to avoid humiliation. . . ." The proposal avoids humiliation by its recognition of our sovereign right to sign out of Vietnam, that being more honorable than bugging out or getting invited out or being kicked out. In addition to its positive response to Mr. Nixon's demand for an early release of the POWs, the proposal accepts the integrity of the South as a separate zone with its own administration and responsibility of negotiating freely with the North.

Now it is up to Mr. Nixon. Senator Hatfield pleads with him "earnestly and sincerely" to accept the basic element in the July 1 plan – the pulling out of all our forces by the end of this year. In his interview last week with Anthony Lewis of *The New York Times*, Le Duc Tho speaks of that date as a "reasonable one," but not necessarily the only possible one. Even the Joint Chiefs of Staff, sensitive to casualty lists, drug addiction and sagging morale, must by now be ready to counsel the President along less belligerent lines than heretofore. It is not conceivable that a General (Maxwell Taylor) could today advise a President that "as an area for the operation of US troops, South Vietnam is not an excessively difficult or unpleasant place to operate." Along with the rest of us, the military establishment must hope for a negotiated settlement which, though short of victory, is not defeat. That is what is within the President's reach.

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The Inquiry

Since the 54-42 defeat of Hatfield-McGovern last month, members of Congress have continued to flail at the war, with a few like Mike Gravel of Alaska possibly headed for guerrilla tactics and civil disobedience. They have helped push through the Senate a nine-month deadline for troop withdrawal, they have sniped at the Selective Service Act, they are deflating the POW issue as an obstacle to negotiations, and now buoyed by the leak of the Pentagon Papers, they are mounting their demands for committees of inquiry. Senator Symington has requested a quarter of a million dollars for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to rake through classified files and compile its own history of the Vietnam commitment. Several years ago Senator Fulbright's company would have had this show all to itself, but a growing number of House members are letting it be known that they, too, want to be in on the act. Thirty representatives are sponsoring HR 342, a resolution introduced by 10-term Congressman Edward Boland (Appropriations Committee) to set up a joint congressional committee to investigate the origins of the war. Boland (D, Mass.) has appealed to the Senate to join forces, and at last report Fulbright and Mansfield were mulling it over.

But HR 342, subscribed by such adamant critics of the war as Michael Harrington (D, Mass.) and Bella Abzug (D, NY), takes on a more benign, even acquiescent, cast if you plod through the small type of Section 1. It says that the Senate and House would each choose a delegation of six, heavily weighted by seniority, two-thirds of whom would come from the committees on foreign relations and appropriations. For example, Senators Allen Ellender (D, La.) and Milton Young (R, ND) would serve with Senators Fulbright and Aiken, while as the President *pro tempore*, Ellender would fill the remaining two positions. The House line-up, to include George Mahon (D, Texas) and Frank Bow (R, Ohio) of Appropriations, would be even more disposed to look kindly upon the Vietnam record. Such a group might well represent a consensus of the senior leadership, and it did manage to refuse *ex officio* seats for the committees of armed services, but it would not be a tough-minded investigator. Perhaps that is why it has such eminent support; certainly a joint committee of this sort would give the administration less trouble than would the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Its sponsors believe that a joint congressional committee would "carry more weight" than any other board of inquiry, but weight with whom? The subjects of the investigation? Still, they are partly right – there is a problem with special tribunals like the Warren or Kerner Commissions, at least so long as Mr. Nixon is in the White House. They cannot do their jobs well if the Executive, on whose cooperation they partially depend, is hostile. We question the utility of any congressional inquiry, for Congress itself has been an accomplice in writing the record to be examined. At any rate, any such inquiry ought to bide in hope till 1973. By then, possibly, a congressional committee, joint or otherwise, might have the detachment and the self-assurance to demand declassification of Pentagon secrets or to dress down noncooperative witnesses.

Raw material for hearings exists in the 47 volumes of the Pentagon study already published, and readers of *The New York Times* may ask what further evidence is needed. But the study itself is an indictment by inference, and its explanation of the military build-up at times suggests that American policymakers were something like Greek tragic heroes. What is wanted is a cooler assessment of the Pentagon Papers and other materials by a commission of citizens legislatively mandated to get the truth, one that will sift the moral and constitutional responsibilities of four US administrations for the war, one that projects a history of Cold War fixations which took us from Berlin to Korea to Saigon. Such an inquiry, Telford Taylor said last week, is "more urgently needed now than criminal prosecution of military and civilian leaders" for war crimes. It should, he says, have subpoena powers and access to Executive files and personnel.

Supporters of HR 342 can point to a few scant legislative precedents for their proposed inquiry. In May and June of 1951, a joint committee of Armed Services and Foreign Relations reviewed the stalemate in Korea. Headed by the canny Richard Russell of Georgia, the committee's Democratic majority gently vindicated the President and slowly defused the White House potential of General Douglas MacArthur. In 1946 another such committee spent six months prying into Pearl Harbor but uncovered little to embarrass the President. Only in 1863 did a joint congressional committee directly challenge the President on the conduct of a war.

This time Congress may be more disposed to track down who did what and why, thus rising to its constitutional responsibilities for the common defense and domestic tranquility. There are plenty of loose ends to trace, just within the narrow confines of the Pentagon study. A thorough inquiry would identify the army of anonymous analysts and insiders who helped get us so deeply engaged (and who later wrote the 7000 page report), consider by what measurements they calculated the adversary's capacity for resistance, and pore over the loose rhetoric and expansive treaties that boxed in successive administations. Did an elite of policymakers learn from Wilson and FDR, as *The Economist* suggests, that secret maneuver and public deception are the only way to involve a great Western democracy in large-scale war? Along the way, though, Congress should investigate itself. The war may have been patched together in secret, but the 50,000 American lives and the $250 billion have been squandered in broad daylight, and Congress never said "stop."

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Code Cracking

The specter has been raised of a massive breach in the nation's communications security as a consequence of the publication by newspapers of top-secret, official documents from the McNamara study of the Vietnam war. Mr. Joseph Alsop, for example, finds that "the quantity of 'plain text' published in the *Times* is already so great that the government cryptographers now consider as compromised all the secret messages sent in the same period over the same types of coding machines."

One can defer to Mr. Alsop's familiarity with confidential information, without accepting his judgment on cryptography. Communications security in the US has progressed considerably since World War II. The old "code wheel" machines, popular at post World War II consulates and for low-level Navy ship messages, invited "cracking" in the traditional sense, because they used the same code base every day. Enough messages and skilled cryptographers could break the system. Today, all secret messages are sent by high-speed equipment, and the code is not breakable. The principle in use is that of the "one-time pad" – used up and destroyed page by page. Secret texts are enciphered with a one-time, random selected code to produce the coded message. It is this that is transmitted. If you have the answer in hand, as Mr. Alsop points out, you could find the original "one time" letters. But it is only good for that one message.

Cutting Down Ma Bell

In Virginia, the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company has asked for permission to increase rates an average of 17 percent per customer. In Rhode Island, New England Telephone wants a 24 percent hike. In California, the state Public Utilities Commission has just approved a 21 percent boost in most customers' basic service rates, and Pacific Telephone wants still more. Bell System subsidiaries have filed for higher rates in more than 21 states within the past 18 months and have won increases totaling more than $600 million. On top of this, the Federal Communications Commission has permitted the mother company, American Telephone and Telegraph, to boost interstate toll revenues by $175 million, while it studies AT&T's request for an additional six percent increase that would cost phone users $385 million.

Why are telephone rates zooming when, in many cities, service is seemingly breaking down? Why aren't the added revenues from new subscribers and increased toll calls sufficient to offset additional costs? The answers raise many questions about the government's ability to protect consumers from powerful monopolies.

Phone rates are fixed in each state by a chummy process that is formally called regulation. The phone company announces that it desperately needs higher rates – not for selfish profit reasons, but so that service can continue to improve. The regulatory commission holds public hearings, listens to the testimony with appropriate outward skepticism, then rules that the utility will be granted "only" two-thirds or so of its request. That the original request was inflated, that the commissioners are political appointees whose patron has been aided by the utility, that the company's lobbyists are adeptly pampering, or trying to pamper, the commissioners in private, are some of the less visible, but vital parts of the game.

In theory, there are two stages in fixing a telephone company's rates. First the regulatory commission examines the company's operating expenses and adjusts or disallows any expenses with which it finds fault. Then it determines how much revenue the company will be allowed to take in, based on the rate base (usually the depreciated original cost of plant) multiplied by what the commissioners judge to be a "fair and reasonable" rate of return. The commission's responsibility is to ensure adequate service at the lowest possible cost to consumers. In practice, commissioners usually display a far greater loyalty to AT&T shareholders than to the phone-using public, and even when they are not so inclined, the rate-fixing process is such that phone companies get away with far more than they are entitled to. A case in point is the recent rate increase granted to Pacific Telephone in California.

Pacific Telephone is 90 percent owned by AT&T; it is the largest of the 21 principal operating subsidiaries which, along with Western Electric, a wholly owned manufacturing subsidiary, make AT&T the world's biggest corporation, with assets greater than those of General Motors, Ford, Chrysler, General Electric and IBM combined. Like other American phone companies, Pacific's goal is to take as much money as possible from customers and to transfer that money to executives, first of all, and then to bondholders and shareholders. Its game-plan for increasing intake from customers has at least three elements. First, it continually seeks to expand its capital investment, thereby increasing the rate base on which its allowable profits are calculated. This means, for example, that when faced with a choice between leasing a building or constructing one, Pacific will always choose the latter, because capital sunk into a building counts as an increment to the rate base, whereas rent is merely an operating expense. Second, Pacific attempts to win a higher *rate* of return on its rate base. Third, it seeks to transfer as much as possible of its intake to Western Electric, which, as a nonregulated corporation, faces no limit on the profits it can earn (and lately has been making about 11 percent on equity, despite the current reces-

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sion). Western not only manufactures almost all of Pacific's equipment; it also installs and repairs a good deal of it and acts as a purchasing agent for supplies that it doesn't make itself. This cheats the telephone customer in several ways. His company loses the advantage of competitive bidding (Western charges Pacific as much per unit for an order of ten telephones as for an order of ten thousand). In addition, when Pacific hires Western to install equipment, instead of doing the work itself, the customer suffers twice – first because he pays for Western's higher profit margin, and again because that excess profit is incorporated in Pacific's total rate base for years to come.

All three tactics, plus a fancy bookkeeping shuffle, are fused superbly in the latest rate increase case. Pacific claimed it needed a higher rate of return so that it could attract nearly $5 billion in new capital; the new capital would be used to increase the rate base, and most of it would go to Western Electric. Customers would thus be made to pay higher rates now for the privilege of paying even higher rates later, though the only noticeable improvement in service would be the gradual introduction of Touchtone. On top of this, Pacific would charge customers for federal income tax payments which, because of an old accelerated depreciation rule, the company would never pay. Instead of passing this tax break on to its customers, in other words, Pacific would use it to squeeze from them over the next few years what amounts to an interest-free loan of nearly $1 billion.

The California Public Utilities Commission, all five of whose members are Reagan-appointed Republicans, bowed to nearly every Pacific thrust. It approved Pacific's enormous new capital investment plan, representing a 20 percent increase in the rate base each year, though the number of new subscribers is growing at only four percent per year. It granted a 7.85 percent return on rate base (up from 6.9 percent, and equivalent to a 9.5 percent return on equity), ostensibly so Pacific could attract new capital, though Pacific's bond rating is triple-A and its stock has never lacked buyers. It authorized every penny of Pacific's diversions to Western Electric, and rubber-stamped the collection from customers of fictitious federal taxes. The only refreshing news was the Commission's disapproval of about $1 million in advertising expenses, on the grounds that a monopoly has little need to promote its wares.

All of which gives rise to several thoughts. Phone rates in America keep climbing unnecessarily because the aim of private telephone corporations is to enrich investors at the expense of customers – not to provide service at the lowest possible cost. If phone companies were truly "public utilities," telephone rates would cover only operating expenses plus the minimum return required to obtain needed capital – a return that would not be much higher than the interest rate paid by savings banks or US savings bonds. On this kind of basis, telephone companies *could* operate without demanding rate increases every few years or so, but under the present system it isn't likely. As William Bennett, a former California PUC Commissioner, has noted, any telephone company president who doesn't push for healthy rate increases would be fired forthwith.

Ideally America's best guarantee of low-cost phone service would be a diversified system of consumer-owned and government-owned telephone companies, similar to municipal power companies and the electric co-ops, but from a practical standpoint the cost of buying out AT&T would be prohibitive. A slightly less ambitious alternative would be to break up the great telephone monopoly – divest AT&T of its operating subsidiaries and Western Electric, and convert at least one operating company into a co-op to provide some yardstick competition. The Justice Department under President Truman once got started in this direction – it sought, under the antitrust laws, to split Western Electric from AT&T. But in 1956 the Republicans agreed out of court to let the combine stand.

Cancer Cure

The Senate last week passed by a vote of 79-1 a bill to to create a new cancer-fighting agency in the federal government. The bill, backed by President Nixon, represents a compromise between an earlier proposal by Senator Edward Kennedy and enemies of the new agency.

When Kennedy introduced his bill last January, the medical research field feared that science was being sacrificed to politics. The National Cancer Institute at NIH has until now coordinated all such government-sponsored research. Kennedy wanted to give it a higher priority in federal planning by replacing the old institute with a "Conquest of Cancer Agency" independent of NIH. The head of the agency was to be a presidential appointee with authority to submit his budget directly to Congress without prior approval of NIH or HEW, thus minimizing bureaucratic delay in processing cancer funds. The new agency was to be modeled after the NASA moon-shot program. By 1976, Kennedy said, it would be operating on a budget of nearly $1 billion a year. (After approving a $100 million boost this year, Congress brought the level of federal spending on cancer research to $323 million.)

Among the groups opposing Kennedy's plan were the AMA, American Hospital Association, and the American Association of Medical Colleges. The AMA told the senator that his approach threatened to "isolate cancer research from the mainstream of biomedical research," and that a "fragmentation of our national

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health effort" would result from decentralizing NIH's authority. They cited the separate National Institute of Mental Health as an example of this fragmentation and said that "experience has proven this move to be a bitter disappointment, both to the scientists at NIMH and to the cause of mental health in general." In testimony at Senate hearings, the President of the AAMC, Dr. John Cooper, advised that our knowledge of cancer is too limited to justify an intensified research effort, that no one knows which area of medicine is most likely to turn up the key to a cure. Establishing a national cancer authority now, Dr. Cooper felt, would be a step towards "piecemeal dismantling" of NIH, leading in the end to a handful of isolated, introspective research agencies. It was feared that the new "cancer-cure" program would draw funds away from unrelated but equally important biomedical study. And if the project were unsuccessful, public disappointment could cause a general decline in approrpations for medical research. The AAMC cites the case of a 1954 project to find a "magic bullet" which would kill cancer. It enjoyed enthusiastic support until, after a series of failures, there proved to be no simple chemical cure. Then it was forgotten.

The compromise closely follows Kennedy's proposal but stipulates that the Conquest of Cancer Agency should be independent *within* the NIH. One of the men who worked on the bill says it was "deliberately drafted to prevent concern of the AAMC and similar groups." But the AAMC is still concerned. Although the new bill incorporates two of the most important elements of the old institute – peer review of new projects and close contact with NIH – Dr. Cooper does not understand how the agency can be financially and administratively independent and still remain "within" NIH. He remains skeptical of any legislation that singles out one area of biomedical research for special attention.

Banks and Consumers

In testimony last month before the National Commission on Consumer Finance, Ralph Nader charged that the federal bank inspection system contains several large loopholes. The Comptroller of the Currency, Nader says, neither allows state examiners inside national banks nor instructs his own examiners to check for violations of state consumer laws. All federally chartered banks and loan companies come under the jurisdiction of the Comptroller, not the state banking commissioners. As a result, 4600 national banks (which hold 58 percent of all deposits) are never made accountable to state consumer protection laws.

After Nader's testimony, the deputy comptroller and his general counsel confirmed that there is no provision in their present inspection system for catching violations of state law. Until enactment of the 1968 Truth-in-Lending law, the comptroller's traditional purpose had been to locate corruption within banks and maintain the stability of the banking market. Because of this overriding interest in solvency, Nader says, the comptroller's office has been lax in enforcing federal Truth-in-Lending regulations. He cited the Chase Manhattan and the First National of Maryland as banks which have benefited from the comptroller's indifference to the consumer. For a year-and-a-half after passage of the federal act, Chase Manhattan continued to use a form of credit-card billing which emphasized a minimum payment plan, permitting the bank to charge the maximum 18 percent interest on remaining credit. The First National of Maryland still uses a form which prints the minimum (high interest) payment in red ink and the low-interest payment in black. After receiving complaints from consumers and queries from Nader's investigators, the FTC ruled in February that emphasis of minimum payment violates Truth-in-Lending. At the time of the hearings last month, the comptroller had not yet taken initiative to check other banks for the same violation.

Confronted with Nader's charge that national banks are not examined for possible violations of state law, the comptroller's spokesmen produced excuses for not changing their ways. It would involve a conflict of jurisdictions, they argued, to allow state examiners into national banks or to expect federal agents to pursue state violations. Also, they said, there are now scores of different state consumer protection laws, and reeducating federal examiners in the laws of fifty states would be an enormous task. At the end of the session, the deputy comptroller agreed that his office could possibly work out examiners' checklists composed of the most important local laws suggested by state consumer agencies. He promised to send out a letter warning banks that overemphasis of minimum payment on credit plans is now considered a violation of federal law.

But these are short-range solutions. Nader advocates a substantial change in the federal supervisory system; he would set up an independent consumer protection agency designed specifically to locate complaints and monitor the federal agencies already in existence. Such a consumer-oriented agency would counterbalance the present pro-industry leaning of many federal regulators. Nader believes that the comptroller's office has shown a "history of hostility or indifference to the consumer borrower." He points out that national banks supply over 90 percent of the comptroller's annual budget – a factor which is bound to keep that office on close terms with the industry it is expected to regulate. Until federal agencies take an aggressive role in protecting the consumer, he will continue to rely on outside investigators like Nader.

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Black Politics

Mississippians elect a new governor, legislature and all county officials this fall. An estimated 288,000 blacks were registered at the end of 1970, a ten-fold increase since the 1965 Voting Rights Act. But 26 of Mississippi's 89 counties, claiming they could not redistrict (one man, one vote) without reregistration, or that their voting rolls had long needed purging (some had not been updated in 30 years), required voters to reregister this year. This disenfranchised an estimated 110,000 new black voters, most of whom were initially registered only at considerable risk to their jobs and are yet to cast a ballot. Despite repeated calls for help from Washington, the July 2 registration deadline came and passed without federal registrars.

Optimistic registration workers estimate that they will break even, though they had hoped 320,000 blacks would be voting (along with 720,000 whites) in the coming elections. The noisy gubernatorial candidacy of dark horse Charles Evers helped get many blacks back into the courthouses in time, but for some, it was too difficult to overcome again the old psychological barriers.

Besides the colorful Evers campaign, 200 blacks are running for all-important bastions of courthouse power across the state. Mississippi this November could easily surpass Alabama's record of 104 black elected officials; blacks may gain control of a half-dozen county governments, including several contiguous ones in the Delta. The presence of Evers and all those as yet unsolicited black votes on the political horizon has taken firebrand race-baiting out of the stump rhetoric for the first time. Only arch-segregationist gospel singer Jimmy Swan still waves Theodore Bilbo's book, *Separation or Mongrelization*, and says "we're on the last page, now." But Charles Evers, with Mississippi police protection, brazenly mocks the way "ole Bilbo used to stand right here on these courthouse steps and make the people scream with hate. As a boy, I used to come down to hear the way he said 'nigger.' He said it long and drawn-out, meaner than anybody I ever heard."

The next governor will probably be a relative moderate named Charles Sullivan, the current lieutenant governor. While tactically defending those who choose to send some 40,000 school children to private "segregation academies," Sullivan has broken with Ross Barnett and Governor John Bell Williams by strongly endorsing the public school system, integrated though it may be. Sullivan is determined to make this the "decade of opportunity" (economic growth), and has dropped traditional Southern xenophobia in favor of an outward-looking attitude. "I want my state to be part of America," he tells the voters. "I want it to be a state of dignity and pride."

Reregistration is a stalling tactic. Mississippi has, as veteran civil rights worker John Lewis says, "the most politically aware black people in the nation." It is only a matter of time before the white political establishment, even the old courthouse gangs, are soliciting their vote and trying to appear in pictures shaking Charles Evers's hand. It won't be this year, but by 1975, if a sufficient Republican threat emerges, blacks may well be able to do in Mississippi what they did last year in South Carolina: provide the 17 percent swing vote which elected Governor John West, with all the concessions that entails.

Florida's Woebegone Economy

Trouble in Fantasyland

Orlando, Florida

There are 6.8 million persons living in the "Sunshine State" today, and in October they will be joined by Mickey Mouse. Walt Disney's most notable creature will take up residence among the pine barrens and orange groves of central Florida, where, 15 miles from Orlando, Walt Disney Productions Inc. is putting together its $300 million, 27,000 acre Walt Disney World as an East Coast counterpart of the Disneyland opened 15 years ago at Anaheim, Calif. Disney World will include, when finished several years hence, in addition to the usual attractions like Fantasyland and Frontierland, five hotels, two golf courses, beaches, campgrounds, a 7,500-acre nature preserve and a new town of around 20,000 humans. It's expected to attract 10 million visitors during the first full year of operation, about 4.5 million of whom are projected as coming especially to visit Mickey et al.

In 1940, Florida was the least populous of all the Southeastern states; the 1970 census shows it leading them all and ranking ninth among the 50 states. In the 1960s, Florida's population zipped up 37 percent, and the cleancut men who manage Disney World claim their attraction will create 100,000 jobs within five years. In 1970, more than 23 million visitors came to Florida, five times as many as in 1950, and they left a reported $5.5 billion with motels, hotels, golf courses, restaurants and the myriad of "gator land," "reptile land," "monkey land," "jungle land" and "marine land" exhibits which clutter the major highways. Tourism, as might be expected, is Florida's No. 1 industry, followed by citrus fruits (817,000 acres filled with 63.7 million orange, grapefruit, lemon and lime trees, according to civic boosters), livestock, forestry products, and vegetables. Citrus production grew rapidly in the 1950s and early 1960s, but now supply has more than caught up with demand, especially

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for frozen orange concentrate, of which Florida processes 95 percent of national consumption.

While citrus is declining a bit, Florida – like the rest of the Southeast – has been attracting a sizeable amount of industry, especially light manufacturing and electronics. During the 1960s, Florida's labor force increased 41.6 percent vs. a US average gain of 21 percent. Florida's new governor, Democrat Reubin O. Askew says, "If the present rate of growth continues, the East Coast of Florida will soon become one continuous urban area, from south Florida north to the Georgia border." That's more than 400 miles.

So Florida has parlayed sun, sand and salt water into some kind of prosperity. Yet a growing number of Floridians are questioning the foundations upon which their Fantasyland has been sunk. The industry which was lured by big ad budgets and promotional campaigns is polluting the air and fouling the waters – damaging, in short, the state's two biggest assets. Pell-mell growth of cities and towns is fouling the rivers, and even some offshore beach waters. It was the president of the Florida senate, Jerry Thomas, who suggested recently – in a statement unprecedented in his state's history – that Florida stop spending promotional money to attract new residents. "Florida," said Thomas, "no longer desires to be known as the fastest-growing state in the Union. We have our hands full taking care of the residents we now have." (The senator still had enough civic booster in him to forget that California, not Florida, is the fastest-growing state.) A candidate for mayor in St. Petersburg said the state should stop spending money "to bring people down here." Gov. Askew said, "While seeking new industry we must make sure that there are more pluses than minuses connected with it. For the sake of a payroll you can create more environmental problems than the payroll merits." Already, the state legislature has trimmed its tourist ad budget from a peak of $963,000 to $495,000 and its overall promotional budget for industry from $960,000 to $490,000.

One of Florida's problems is its more than one million Golden Agers, those over 65 who sell their homes in Ohio, New Jersey, New York and Indiana, among other places, to retire to the Florida sun. In the Tampa-St. Petersburg area on the West Coast, one in every five persons is over 65, and the per capita income there is much lower than the state average. Retirees are not big spenders; they can't be on their income. They often seek part-time jobs, at whatever low pay, and they are disinclined to vote for school bonds and civic improvements. Thus 15 percent of Florida's population acts as an economic (and even social) depressant on the other 85 percent, and even the 85 percent isn't faring too well.

Although Florida ranks ninth in state population, it ranks 24th in per capita income, the best measure of economic well being. Florida's per capita income averages $3,525 (the national average is $3,687), and what wealth there is is unevenly distributed: Only five of the state's 67 counties have a per capita income above the national average; but the per capita figure in 35 counties is not only lower than the national average but lower than the average of the Southeast ($2,800). Statistics supplied by the Bureau of Industrial Development show that Dade County (Miami and the Fantasyland of Miami Beach) is the richest area. The second-ranking county as of 1968 was Brevard (Cape Kennedy), but that area has been hurt by the downgrading of space programs. Brevard is looking to Disney World for some kind of bailout.

Florida's liabilities turn around the state's biggest assets: Citrus and tourism. Citrus employs more than 50,000 persons year 'round, perhaps up to 200,000 seasonally. But however many work in the groves their income is far below par: $69.75 per week for the average of all farm workers in the state and something below that for citrus hands. The deplorable working conditions faced by Florida migrants was highlighted during a Senate committee hearing last year, in which even Coca-Cola (which got into citrus by buying Minute Maid a decade ago) pleaded guilty. Since then, Coke has spent more than $1 million to improve the lot of its citrus workers, only to face the wrath of other growers who claim they can't pay more money in wages, let alone build clean living quarters with running water and toilets.

Tourism can be great for some parts of Florida, but much of inland Florida still resembles a palmetto-pine scrub jungle, through which (or over which) tourists scoot as fast as they can. Tourism is a great generator of jobs in retail trade and services, but they are the next lowest-paid industries in the state. One in every five job-holding Floridians works in retail trade and earns an average $73.34 a week. Another one in five works in services and earns an average $79.71 a week. For every tourist who stays at a fancy hotel in Miami Beach and tips the bellboy a buck, there are 20 who put up in mom-and-pop motels and take the kids to McDonald's for dinner. Read what the Bureau of Industrial Development says: "(Florida's) low level of income is due primarily to the high concentration of employment in the lowest-paying industries. The high concentration of employment in these low-wage industries is due to demands upon the economy for support of tourism. Tourism also has been the generator of other economic ills. Unstable employment in the trade and service industry can be attributed to the seasonality of tourism."

Robert W. Dietsch

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Nationalist Chinese Unease

Repression in Taiwan

Taipei

The Nationalist Chinese government, made up for the most part of the two million Mainlanders who moved here in 1948 and 1949, rides uneasily on the backs of the 12 million native Taiwanese, whose ancestors emigrated from the Mainland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The reassertion of the Nationalists' political authority after 50 years of Japanese occupation that ended with World War II was sealed with the execution in March 1947, of some 10,000 Taiwanese business and intellectual leaders by newly arrived Mainland troops. Though discussion of it is forcibly repressed, the schism remains.

The Taiwanese uprising of February 28, 1947, which inspired the brutal repression, was in protest against the heavy-handedness of the occupying Nationalist forces and the appropriation of jobs and property by the newly arrived Mainlanders. Little has changed in 22 years. Only death has any significant effect on this gerontocracy. Taiwanese are almost completely shut out of jobs in the National government; all police chiefs and most officers in the armed forces are Mainlanders or their descendants born here; 40 percent of positions in the provincial and local governments are held by Mainlanders, and their children are 29 percent of the college and university students, though they make up only 13 percent of the civilian population. Economic growth has reduced this imbalance (Taiwan now enjoys a standard of living second only to Japan's in Asia), but it is a rare Taiwanese who has anything good to say about the government in private.

Should the almost unbroken economic improvement of the last 15 years begin to falter, only their monopoly of armed power would stand between the Mainlanders and the Taiwanese majority. Always acutely conscious of this fact, the government has built a large and extensive network of political police and informers. Anything remotely connected with political dissent that goes beyond nit-picking is suppressed, including scenes of a political demonstration in the Jack Lemmon comedy, "The Out-of-Towners," and the entry for "Mao Tse-tung" in the English-language dictionaries pirated here in great abundance. (The government has never signed the international copyright convention.) Reasoning that the "temporary retreat" to Taiwan constitues an emergency, the government retains martial law. "Spreading rumors" is punishable by a term of from seven years to life. The controlled newspapers used to publish news of arrests for "anti-government" activities, but this practice has ceased; informal channels have had to take over. It was estimated late last year that there are some 4,000 political prisoners in Taiwan's jails. The vast majority of these are Taiwanese.

Writers, teachers, and intellectuals are among the most prominent recent victims of the security forces. Po Yang, a leading novelist and essayist, was sentenced in a secret military trial in the fall of 1969 to 12 years in prison; his crime: attending a Communist spy school in Manchuria for two days 20 years earlier and trying (unsuccessfully) to persuade a friend to remain behind on the Mainland rather than flee to Taiwan. Last fall several writers on the *Central Daily News*, the newspaper of the ruling Nationalist Party were rounded up, along with a vice president of the leading broadcasting company. In April, another of the island's leading writer's, Li Ao, was arrested in a sweep that also gathered in Meng Hsiang-ko, a translator of Hesse's works into Chinese; Ts'ai Mao-t'ang, a scholar and teacher at the American-run Stanford Language Center; and perhaps a dozen others. One reliable estimate is that 65 such suspects were picked up in February and March alone.

The political prisoner here is held incommunicado for months. Nothing appears in the newspapers about arrests, charges, or sentences. Chinese officials contend that the torture and beatings used in the past have been abandoned, but in the rare case that is tried publicly witnesses are likely to hear the defendant repudiate his "confession" on the grounds that it was extracted only after long and uninterrupted questioning. The right to cross-examine is denied. Like their brothers on the Mainland, the government provides a kind of thought-reform for its most tractable dissidents; officials consider a three-year sentence to one of the minimum-security thought-reform prisons a merciful outcome for the defendant, even where the offense is negligible. Given the ugly reputation of other prisons here, they may be right.

An American missionary and his wife were expelled in March for alleged involvement with the Taiwanese Independence Movement, which is active in Japan and the United States but rarely surfaces here. Within the last few months the American Armed Forces have quietly shipped out several military men at the behest of the Chinese authorities, for the same reason. Taiwanese and Mainlander alike believe that the escape from house arrest here of the Taiwanese professor P'eng Ming-min, who is now in Michigan, was engineered by the CIA.

The government has argued that it is in the interest of the US to help suppress the Taiwanese, on the theory that an independent Taiwan would be sympathetic to the Mainland. This assertion has found a less sympathetic hearing on the US side in recent months, especially since the mild flirtation between the US and the People's Republic of China. It is conceivable that a Taiwanese-run government with status as a province or semi-autonomous region of the People's Republic might serve the US and the Mainland as a

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face-saving solution to the two-China problem.

Recent incidents – bombings of a USIS branch library in Tainan and the Bank of America office in Taipei, petty harrassment of military men – suggest the possibility of a cautionary campaign by the government against any change in US policy; there is ample precedent for such an effort in the 1957 storming of the US Embassy here, which was incited and led by Nationalist Party functionaries. Along with the suppression of domestic dissent, this kind of sniping is likely to increase with the approach of the crucial UN vote on seating the People's Republic of China.

Phil Ginsburg

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Government in the Suburbs

Housing Black Workers

A few days after the President, in his housing message, said that he would promote racial, but not economic integration, HUD Secretary George Romney and GSA administrator Robert L. Kunzig announced that wherever a federal facility is to be built, HUD and GSA "will develop an affirmative action plan to assure federal personnel access to low and moderate income housing on a nondiscriminatory basis. . . ." That the strict enforcement of such a policy would promote economic integration cannot be denied: GSA controls some 10,000 facilities throughout the country. Presidential adviser Daniel P. Moynihan noted last year "that where the federal government locates its offices, its plants, its factories, has very great consequences for people, not just for the Government. . . ."

The HUD-GSA agreement of 1971 resulted from a series of battles in the Washington area over policies put forward during the Eisenhower years and subsequently modified during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. In the 1950s, it was feared that concentrating federal facilities would provide too easy a target for the Russians. Thus, the first major federal relocation in the DC area was to move the Atomic Energy Commission some 30 miles out of the District into the wilds of Germantown, Md. Since 1958, the rationalization for dispersion has been based on economics. GSA, often denied funds by Congress to build new structures in the city, turned to rented office space in the suburbs, where costs were about one-half. By 1971, there was slightly more rented federal space in Virginia than in DC, with Maryland accounting for about one-fifth the total. The trend to the suburbs was dramatized when the Navy Department in 1970 transferred 12,500 employees to Arlington, Virginia and the Public Health Service shifted 5500 workers to Rockville, Maryland. Both relocations triggered court action against GSA, in which black, lower-level federal employees who lived in the city charged that the shifts would discriminate against them because, among other things, there was an inadequate supply of low and moderate income housing in the suburbs. (Officials of Montgomery County, Md., of which Rockville is a part, testified publicly that there is a shortage of some 5000 low and moderate cost units in the county. Arlington County has *no* publicly assisted housing, its voters and legislature both having turned it down.)

The increased commuting via inadequate public transportation systems, the blacks argued, would force many of them to give up their jobs. Unless GSA could guarantee that every federal employee could find housing on an open occupancy basis near his place of work, they said, GSA would be in violation of Title VIII of the 1968 Civil Rights Act, which charges all federal agencies to *affirmatively* promote open housing. Despite the court suits, both relocations have taken place. The PHS suit was made moot by a last-minute program – initiated after the suit was brought – to guarantee jobs in the city to all employees who didn't want to move. (Some of them later claimed that many of the jobs offered were "dead-end" slots that could not otherwise have been filled.) The Navy case is still being litigated, with the plaintiffs having expanded their suit to include *all* federal agency relocations.

The Nixon administration involvement in the issue has been mixed. In February 1970, the President issued Executive Order 11512, on the management of federal office space, which required GSA to consider the availability of low and moderate income housing near a proposed site. (Other factors were also to be considered, but the primary ones continued to be cost, the availability of office space, and the particular needs of the agency.) Later, HUD, GSA, and more than a score of other federal agencies formed a task force to write guidelines for carrying out the executive order. HUD and GSA eventually took over the project, with GSA's Kunzig acting as chief honcho.

The guidelines remained in draft form for more than a year, until released last month. Appearing before the US Civil Rights Commission shortly thereafter, Mr. Kunzig maintained that the principles in the guidelines have been operative since he took over GSA in 1969. Only a few hundred employees have been moved out of Washington during his term, he said, and the Government Printing Office, a heavily black facility, has been blocked in its attempt to move to Maryland. In addition, he reported, GSA was working with Mexican-Americans in Fresno, Calif., and blacks in Brookhaven, LI, to assure that the housing guidelines will be carried out for the new Internal Revenue Service facili-

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ties that will be located in these two areas. He personally has intervened in a GSA project in Wilmington, Del., to assure equal opportunity.

The principal defects of the HUD-GSA agreement remain: it leaves evaluation entirely in the hands of HUD and GSA, and the criteria are vague. For example, HUD is charged with determining how much low and moderate income housing there is near a proposed federal site. But the definition of "near" and "adequate" is unclear. (When the Navy moved to Arlington, the Feds pointed out that the new offices were only two miles away from the old offices. Unfortunately, the Potomac River runs between the two locations, doubling the commuting time and increasing the bus fare for inner city – black – employees.) Further, there is no independent agency capable of objectively evaluating a community. (Is there an open occupancy ordinance? Is it enforced? Is the community hostile to nonwhites?) Nor does the HUD-GSA agreement guarantee that an agency relocation be a subject for collective bargaining. Federal employees, after all, have the most at stake, often they are consulted as an afterthought, if at all. They usually learn about the move in the newspapers. Finally, there is no provision for a hearing at which those with opposing viewpoints (including officials of the jurisdiction involved, who may not be enthused about having to provide for increased traffic and other services which a federal facility demands) could make their feelings known to the public.

How the guidelines may be sidestepped can be learned by looking at the proposed relocation of the US Geological Survey to Reston, the new town in Fairfax County, Va. Recently, the Metropolitan Washington Planning and Housing Agency, the group which initiated the suit against the Navy, sued GSA to prevent the move of some 2800 employees to Reston, charging that Gulf-Reston, the developers of the new town, had made no firm commitment to provide housing for low and moderate income USGS employees. A federal judge denied an injunction to prevent the move, so there is no guarantee, save the goodwill of Gulf-Reston and GSA, that the housing *will* be provided.

What is needed is not a "memorandum of understanding" between two honorable men, Romney and Kunzig, but a law. Such a measure (S. 1281) has been introduced by Senator Abraham Ribicoff. It includes the better parts of the HUD-GSA agreement, and goes beyond it. The crux of his bill lies in the section which says that "After January 1, 1972, no government facility may be located in any community which has failed to develop an acceptable plan which provides . . . an adequate supply of housing for middle and lower income employees of the facility. . . ." The bill also provides for an advisory committee on housing for each agency, at least one-third of which is to be composed of low and moderate income employees. Finally, in cases where a community does not meet the housing criteria but where it is imperative that the agency be located, "the Federal Government shall provide the housing to meet the needs of current *and potential* middle and lower income employees." (Emphasis added.) This last provision will assure that as jobs open up for the file clerks, secretaries, and janitors – many of them members of minority groups – who form the bulwark of the federal bureaucracy, housing will also be available nearby. It would be a start at reversing the trends which the Kerner Commission so prophetically warned against.

Robert Cassidy

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The Dairy Lobby

Milking the Consumer

The American housewife is the victim of a carefully planned coup carried out by the biggest dairy interests in the country and some of the best-known members of Congress, with the cooperation of the Nixon administration. For 12 days following March 12, she had the President's assurance that the family milk bill would not go up this year. Farmers had been warned of milk surpluses if farm prices were raised. Then, the day after the administration announced that milk price guarantees would stay at last year's level, the big dairy lobbyists moved to Washington. They said they wanted to help the small dairyman caught in a cost-price squeeze. But in countless private talks they pointed out that dairy interests had contributed big money to Republican and Democratic campaigns, certainly more than the hard-pressed American housewife ever would. The lobbyists reminded the administration that corporate-style political power, even down on the farm, can give or take away votes. And on the 13th day, Nixon no longer resisted; milk prices were raised six percent effective April 1, by direct presidential action. It was disclosed last month that dairy industry lobbyists had given at least $85,000 in 1972 campaign contributions to various Republican committees. According to reports filed with the Clerk of the House of Representatives under the Corrupt Practices Act, the contributions were made immediately before and after the administration announced the rise in price supports March 25. A few weeks later, USDA reported record cash receipts for dairy farmers in 1970 –achieved without a price increase.

Milk products are a costly item in the family budget. Retail dairy product purchases of $15 billion a year take one dollar out of every seven in the consumer food budget. Consumers buy 25 billion quarts of drinking milk a year. The new Department of Agri-

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culture ruling will add one cent a quart to retail prices and cost consumers at least $250 million in the next year. Tack on price increases for other dairy products and the consumer cost of presidential panic over the farm vote goes up to $500 million a year.

The farm folks who usually write their own ticket in Washington are sugar and rice growers, cotton farmers, and cattlemen from Texas and the Mountain states. Now the dairymen, who share with sheep raisers the lowest status in the farm fraternity, have joined the select club of rustic power brokers in White House councils.

The dairymen's new influence in Washington developed following January consultations between Agriculture Secretary Clifford Hardin and representatives of the dairy industry. Milk producers pushed for higher prices. But inflation remained a threat, and butter surpluses were rising. The secretary was under strong pressure from the White House Office of Management and Budget to help hold down the administration's deficit. Nevertheless, Hardin recommended a price increase to the White House.

Dairy spokesmen were split. The powerful and politically motivated American Milk Producers Institute (AMPI), a federation of dozens of milk price bargaining cooperatives in 20 Midwestern states, wants higher prices every year. The huge Wisconsin cooperative, Land O'Lakes, and representatives of dairy cooperatives in California, Oregon and Washington State opposed any price increase. They feared that milk substitutes would make faster inroads in milk markets and surpluses would depress prices. Trade representatives also opposed the price increase. After the dairymen's talk with Hardin, the administration decided to wait until next year, when a milk price increase might appease the farmers just before the elections. The Office of Management and Budget had momentarily defeated the Secretary of Agriculture.

The announcement that milk guarantees would stay at the 1970 level was not expected to be popular with milk producers in key farm areas. So department officials, including Under Secretary J. Phil Campbell, a dairyman himself, took to the road to warn farmers of the unpleasant lessons of past high prices, followed by surpluses and low prices. Mr. Campbell changed his message abruptly after milk guarantees were increased on March 25, suddenly expressing confidence in the farmers' ability to avoid surpluses.

Middlewestern dairymen said before the price rise that production increases of one percent or more would be a dangerous trend encouraging the buildup of excessive supplies. Already the indicators are going against the administration. April and May production rose one percent over last year. USDA's own April milk report showed higher prices for both home-delivered and supermarket milk, and the department's figures for early June indicated a continuing upward trend in prices in 25 major cities.

The ultimate White House reaction to the dairymen's show of political muscle was influenced by unhappy memories of last November's election. Six solidly conservative House seats switched from Republican to Democratic, four Republican governorships were lost, and two Senate seats the President had staked out for personal campaign assistance went to Democrats–all in Minnesota, Wisconsin, the milkman's heartland, the two Dakotas and Nebraska.

Nearly one-third of the House membership, including consumer advocate Sen. Gaylord Nelson (D, Wis.), introduced legislation to raise dairy supports. The congressional rush to get on the milk wagon is not surprising, when we look at the mysterious ACT, ADEPT, SPACE and TAPE. The recent election campaigns of most or many congressmen were supported by over $1 million of dairy industry money funneled through these four little known but rich and powerful acronyms.

The biggest is the Trust for Agricultural Political Education (TAPE), political arm of the American Milk Producers Institute. AMPI members voluntarily contribute one-third of one percent of the milk checks to TAPE, up to a maximum of $100 per year. Dairymen, Inc., in Louisville, Ky., controls SPACE, the Trust for Special Political Agricultural Community Education. Jointly, TAPE and SPACE spent $573,461 since spring 1969, mostly on campaigns. ADEPT and ACT are smaller, but they pulled considerable weight in the battle for higher prices. ADEPT lived up to its name, and gave most of its money to Senators Hubert Humphrey and Edmund Muskie. The former Vice President, now a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, received $10,625. Senator Muskie got $7132, and $5000 went to Senator Hughes, listed as an "honorarium."

House Speaker Carl Albert of Oklahoma and Representative W. R. Poage of Texas, Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, also benefited. Poage received $5000 from the milk industry, and an additional $11,500 was spent on appreciation dinners for him and Rep. Wright Patman (D, Tex.), Chairman of the House Banking and Currency Committee. A $2000 appreciation dinner honored Rep. Albert, a surprisingly low-fat contribution for the majority leader.

Perhaps housewives and consumers should organize under their own acronym to fight for lower milk prices. They could call it Housewives Enlisted for Lower Prices (HELP). Given the increasing power of the dairy interests, they will need their own lobbying organization in 1972.

Muriel Allen and John Schnittker

MURIEL ALLEN *covers Capitol Hill for the* New York Journal of Commerce. JOHN SCHNITTKER *is former Under Secretary of Agriculture.*

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Vietnam War Crimes

The Mylai Mentality

by Daniel Ellsberg

As a peacetime Marine in the 1950s, I was spared the need to confront the possibility that the enemies I was being trained to kill for my country might turn out to be women, children, and babies. I was surrounded then by people who had been in World War II and Korea, and I was trained on war stories of jungle fighting on isolated Pacific islands. These are the myths that have affected the attitudes of this generation of Americans toward violence. Vietnam, of course, has raised questions which this mythic history did not force us to confront – questions about who we are and what we are trying to do and what is permissible to us.

The first point I would like to raise about Mylai is this: If there were no Mylais, no face-to-face killing of women and children by small arms, would the civilians of South Vietnam really know the difference? As you may have noticed, the South Vietnamese civilians, let alone their leadership, did not really raise much protest about Mylai or even show much interest in it. First of all, they are used to such operations in that area – particularly by Koreans, the allies we brought to Vietnam.

Moreover, it is hard for the South Vietnamese to get very excited about killings committed in that particular way, knowing that nearly all of the enormous number of civilian deaths are caused by high explosives from our planes and artillery. They have come to expect these deaths, the killing of women and children from a distance, as a part of the American way of war.

The question remains, how did this particular face-to-face massacre come about? Is it the nature of this war? Is it inevitable in this sort of war? These questions have all been raised. I would suggest that it is in the nature of this war and to be expected. This is the major reason I have concluded that the war in which I participated is one we should not have been fighting. But the cause, I would suggest, is not so much strategic or tactical in any objective sense, but psychological, in terms of the pressures that this war puts on those who participate in it. These pressures lead daily to smaller, unrecorded atrocities, but soonor or later they were likely to produce a Mylai.

The first thing to be mentioned is the frustration to both planners and soldiers of fighting in a war where nothing seems to work, where the rules either don't exist or obviously don't apply, and where they are confronted by impotence and failure day after day. Mylai had to be destroyed not because its occupants posed any threat, but because there was a felt need to destroy some village like it.

I saw that kind of frustration and the effects of it very vividly toward the close of my two years in Vietnam. I saw it develop in a short period – only ten days – in a particular battalion which had been fighting for some months in the jungles of War Zone C where there were no villages. Now the same battalion was exposed to the conditions of the Delta, surrounded by villages and surrounded by water – in fact immersed in water constantly, which added to the frustration. The men preferred the dry jungle fighting.

As days went on in which the men were fired at by invisible snipers, losing casualties at a considerable rate but never having the satisfaction of a body to add to their statistics or to give them evidence that they were having an effect, they grew increasingly angry. The only body they encountered in this ten-day period was that of an eighteen-year-old girl killed by a stray artillery shell.

At this point I took a very odd photograph of a soldier furiously bayoneting a canteen. His lieutenant had just asked for permission to burn an empty house that we had come to and were searching. Because it had this canteen in it and a picture of someone in a uniform that was not familiar to our troops, they assumed it was a Vietcong house and asked for permission to burn it. Permission was denied. There was much swearing and stamping around, and the soldiers took the offending canteen and punched it full of holes. Their desire to burn the house was in part the result of frustration and in part reflected the fact that they honestly didn't know what might work. They had the feel-

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DANIEL ELLSBERG, *who has acknowledged providing the Pentagon Papers on the history of US involvement in Vietnam to* The New York Times *and other newspapers, made the accompanying remarks during a congressional seminar in February 1970. Mr. Ellsberg's statement is excerpted from* War Crimes and the American Conscience, *edited by Erwin Knoll and Judith Nies McFadden, published by Holt, Rinehart and Winston.*

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ing that at least if they burned the houses, something would happen; their presence would have been marked. Perhaps the Vietcong would be discouraged from operating in that area, though there were many houses, thousands in the area, and unless you burned them all, the Vietcong would still have shelter.

A week later I was on a patrol that burned every house it came to. I assumed the orders had been changed. When I returned to the battalion headquarters, I asked the operations officer why he had changed the orders, but he denied they had been changed. I said, "You can see the smoke over there, can't you?" Pillars of smoke were rising. He replied, "Sure, I see that smoke. I called the company commander and asked him what the smoke was and he said they were burning the thatch off bunkers." I said, "They were burning every house they came to." He said he would do something about it. Within ten days this battalion had moved to a state of mind where lieutenants and captains were burning houses in violation of higher orders and lying about it.

The understanding of Mylai has been distorted in some accounts I have read by the suggestion that something like this probably happens all the time. This may be true, on a smaller scale, of the Koreans, but is not really quite true of our troops. Mylai was beyond the bounds of permissible behavior, and that is recognizable by virtually every soldier in Vietnam.

"We only committed slaughter – you're guilty of indiscretion."

They know it was wrong: No shots had been fired at the soldiers, no enemy troops were in the village, nobody was armed. The men who were at Mylai knew there were aspects out of the ordinary. That is why they tried to hide the event, talked about it to no one, discussed it very little even among themselves.

But if Mylai was still exceptional, it was separated only by a very fine distinction from incidents that occur regularly and that are regarded as permissible. A few shots from the village, a few uniforms found in a hut, a measure of resistance, would have removed any question about what happened at Mylai. We operate on the principle that any action is permissible against a foe – even if he is a thirteen-year-old boy who is carrying a rifle – or even, when we come to strategic bombing, against anyone whose death might inconvenience a foe.

I am reminded of the occasion of my first sight of an alleged enemy in Vietnam. I was flying over the Plain of Reeds with a pilot who had a deserved reputation for daring and acuity; he could spot fox holes and bunkers and what-not from a great height, long before I would have seen them. At one point in the flight he told me over the intercom, "There is a VC down there." At his suggestion, I had brought a weapon with me, in case we were shot down. As soon as he spoke, I drew my pistol. He pulled out his M16 rifle and went into a dive. I looked down and saw two men in black pajamas on the ground, apparently running away from a boat nearby. I noticed that they were not armed, and mentioned this to the pilot. He said he assumed they had left their weapons in the boat. He came down again, firing the M16 from the moving plane at fairly close range, fifty to one hundred feet. The maneuver was repeated for the next twelve or fourteen minutes. While we were coming down at the men, they would lie on the ground; when we moved off, they would get up and run. We would come down again, dive at them, and fire the rifle. Finally he pulled off, without hitting them, and I asked, "Does this happen often?" "All the time," he said. "Do you ever hit anyone in this way?" I asked, and he replied, "Not very often. It's hard to hit anybody from a plane with an M16, but it scares the shit out of them. They will be pretty scared VC tonight."

I asked him how he knew they were VC, and he answered, "There's nothing but VC in the Plain of Reeds." The Plain of Reeds was a free-fire zone, which meant we had condemned to death all those who might be found in it. I was later told that there were almost two thousand fishermen in the area who continued to fish during our attacks.

This game, this hunt, is something that goes on daily in almost every province of Vietnam. I am sure the Vietcong will come out of this war with great pride in the fact that they confronted American machines and survived. I came out of that plane ride with a strong sense of unease.

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Second Thoughts on the Green Revolution

by Michael Perelman

The Nobel Peace Prize for 1970 was awarded to Dr. Norman Borlaug. In an announcement made across the street from the US Embassy in Oslo, Mrs. Aase Lionaes, chairman of the five-member prize committee of the Norwegian Parliament, said, "Dr. Borlaug, as prime mover in the 'green revolution,' has made it possible for the developing countries to break away from hunger." Later Mrs. Lionaes added, "In short, we do not any longer have to be pessimistic about the economic future of developing countries." I wonder.

Green Revolutions are nothing new. The Incas selected the best corn seeds from each harvest to plant in the next growing season; as a result corn evolved from a grass with a tiny kernel to what we have today. We have records of a Sung emperor of 11th century China who introduced a rapid-maturing rice from Indochina which could be harvested 100, instead of 180 days after sowing. Later rices were developed which matured within 30 or 40 days.

But not all Green Revolutions have had the desired effect. Sir Walter Raleigh, the Norman Borlaug of his day, introduced the potato to Ireland around 1588. The yield of miracle spuds was far greater than that of cereals, but the benefits went primarily to the landlords, not to the majority of the Irish who were tenants. The standard of living seems to have fallen as yield increased, not that Jonathan Swift could write in 1727 about "the miserable dress and diet and dwelling of the people, the families of farmers who pay great rents living in filth and nastiness upon buttermilk and potatoes, not a shoe or stocking to their feet, or a house so convenient as an English hogsty to receive them." Irish agriculture, highly concentrated on a single crop, was particularly susceptible to blight, and when the blight came it killed between two and three million people.

The seeds which are the basis of today's Green Revolution were developed by research funded by the Ford and Rockefeller foundations. While this research was motivated by humanitarian concern, it is a fact that among the beneficiaries of the Green Revolution are American oil and petrochemical companies, whose fertilizers and pesticides are needed in heavy doses to make the new seeds grow, and, to a lesser extent, the Ford Motor Company, whose tractor exports have been boosted.

US corporations are not the only beneficiaries, or even the major ones. A new set of farmers is emerging in the developing nations to reap the harvest of the Green Revolution: retired military officers and civil servants, doctors, lawyers and businessmen, for many of whom farming is a tax dodge (another sign of the Americanization of farming). Landlords get their share too. Land values are soaring three-, four- and even five-fold in the Punjab and the Purnea district of Bihar, where the new agriculture is in vogue. Rents too are on the rise. In India, rent on the land is climbing from the more usual (though illegal) 50 percent of the harvest to as high as 70 percent. Traditional rights of the peasants are being weakened; it becomes more profitable for the landlord to evict his tenants and employ wage laborers with new machinery in their place. One study by the Pakistan Planning Commission shows that mechanization of agriculture reduces the need for labor by 50 percent. The commission estimates that by 1985 four million farmers in West Pakistan will be evicted.

Peasants evicted from their land have no place to go, no jobs waiting for them. The International Labor Organization estimates that even with industrial growth rates of seven to nine percent a year (a rate which almost no developing nations have achieved), capital requirements in industry are so heavy and the number of new workers per dollar of capital so small, that the industrial sector will have a hard time absorbing the increase in workers created by population growth alone, not to mention displacement from the farms. Robert McNamara told the Columbia University Conference on International Economic Development in February 1970 that "just as the censuses of the 1950s helped alert us to the scale of the population explosion, the urban and employment crises of the sixties are alerting us to the scale of social displacement and general uprootedness of population which are exploding not only in numbers but in movement as well."

The Green Revolution has other effects on the poor. The governments of many developing nations have artificially supported food prices to encourage farmers to produce more. These price supports cost money:

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either the government must buy food at a subsidized price and sell it for a loss, or it must require food to be sold at a high price to consumers. In countries like India and Pakistan, where agriculture accounts for about half of the gross national product, great amounts of money are used to underwrite farm subsidies. In Pakistan, for instance, $100 million a year goes to support the price of wheat. The high cost of these subsidies – most of which go to the largest landowners – leaves less money for social services such as housing, health and education – the kind of expenditures that help uprooted peasants coming to the cities looking for work.

Subsidies are needed to support the Green Revolution because cultivation of the new varieties is more expensive per acre than the crops they replaced. A US Department of Agriculture report cites a survey of Philippine farmers who decided to stop growing the new miracle rice. Over half said their reason was the added expense of cultivating the new variety. "It was widely assumed that the increased returns from growing the new variety would have exceeded the cost," the USDA report concluded, "yet there is little solid evidence on this point."

The higher cost of growing the new varieties has led to an enormous expansion of the need for farm credit. But farm credit, at a reasonable rate of interest, is just what the poor peasants can't get. In a small village near Calcutta a *New York Times* reporter asked a poor peasant, Mr. Tej Singh, if he had heard of the new miracle seeds. Mr. Singh replied that he had, but "these things are for the rich landlords, not me." His only dream was to pay off his debts, which were quite burdensome to him, because the going interest rate for small peasants was 24 percent per annum.

Besides the social problems already mentioned, the Green Revolution will tend to increase regional disparities, since the new seeds work their miracles only where the land is well irrigated. In East Pakistan, where there is little water control, the new rices are too short to be grown during the monsoon floods; as a result the Green Revolution has passed East Pakistan by, while it has taken root in West Pakistan. Robert Critchfield, writing in *The New Republic* in 1969, reported hearing "serious talk from both Indians and Pakistanis at the FAO of the possibility that Pakistan's growing economic disparity might lead to a break-off of East Pakistan and its formation with India's West Bengal of a new independent, leftist, and possibly ungovernable republic."

Ironically, the country which might best be able to utilize the technology of the Green Revolution is Communist China. China has a great deal of irrigated land; its economy can adapt to the Green Revolution without social displacement because it isn't based upon prices, subsidies and rents. Nor is unemployment a serious problem in China. But for the rest of the world, the Green Revolution is limited to an area the size of a postage stamp on a globe, to use the expression of a Ford Foundation official; there just isn't very much irrigated land. And in some places the amount of irrigated land is decreasing. In West Pakistan, it is estimated that an acre of land is lost every five minutes to water-logging and salinity.

Of course, new lands can be irrigated through construction of dams and aqueducts, but such projects are expensive and few developing nations can afford them without massive outside aid. So the postage stamp is not likely to get very much bigger in the near future, and perhaps it is just as well. Peasants, though poor, are better off on the land than jammed into jobless, unsanitary cities. Old crop varieties, which have been naturally selected over the years for resistance to pests and disease, are less likely to succumb to blight. The new miracle seeds, on the other hand, are like a trigger for widespread crop disaster. Vast contiguous areas are planted with only one type of seed, often with no assurance that it is blight resistant. (The new wheat grown in Asia, for example, was selected to be resistant to rusts prevalent in Mexico, where the wheat was developed; no one knows whether it is resistant to rusts on the other side of the globe.) Ireland's bitter experience, as well as the present corn blight in the United States, point out the danger of planting experimental breeds in vast quantity.

People are starving, and something must be done, but is the Green Revolution the answer? India loses large percentages of its harvest because of inadequate storage facilities; in 1968, the Indian Food and Agricultural Ministry estimated that ten percent of the harvest was eaten by rats. This can be remedied without driving people off the land. Yields in many parts of Asia are low because much of the land is infertile. Fertility can be restored and yields increased, but this can be done in such a way that the natural diversity of crops is preserved, and the status of poor farmers is improved. For this purpose land reform is more important than the breeding of seeds that require large-scale, mechanized cultivation. Normam Borlaug says, "Plant breeding is like poker. If you've got a bad hand, throw it in. If you've got a good one, don't be afraid to bet." Dr. Borlaug and his friends are betting a lot of other people's lives, and I'm not quite sure they know what is in the cards.

COMING: The Chicago Panther Case – a report by James W. Singer and Thomas J. Dolan

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Los Angeles vs. the Indians—II

Bad Day at Black Mesa

Oraibi, Ariz.

It has been a convenience for white immigrants to lump all native Americans together as Indians, though most of the peoples we call Indians are as different from one another as Greeks from Swedes. They have different origins and histories, speak different languages, worship different gods and follow different lives. None has more fascinating traditions or a more appealing world-view than the Hopis of the arid Southwest.

Oraibi, the Hopis' spiritual capital, sits atop a 600-foot escarpment in the middle of the Arizona desert. A paved highway passes about a quarter of a mile away, and a dirt road leads to the village edge. There's nothing physically attractive about the place – many of the adobe buildings are in disrepair, rusting car hulks are strewn about, and color is notably absent – yet there is something here that immediately arouses a feeling of awe. Perhaps it is the landscape, evocative of the holy lands around Jerusalem; or the vista south toward the San Francisco peaks, where Hopi spirits are said to reside, like Greek gods upon Olympus; or the knowledge that this is the oldest continuously inhabited community in the United States.

The first house as one enters Oraibi belongs to the *kikmongwi,* or spiritual leader of the village, Mina Lansa, and her husband John. Mina's father, who was a *kikmongwi* before her, once told her that Hopis have lived in Oraibi and on neighboring mesas for 3000 years. History books put the date of settlement at around 1100 A.D.

Every morning John Lansa walks from his village on the mesa to a farm in the desert below, a remarkable farm whose soil runs through one's fingers like sand, that uses no irrigation, no artificial fertilizers, tractors or pesticides. Here John grows corn, beans, watermelon, squash, grapes and peaches, carefully surrounding each seedling with rocks to provide protection from the wind. By planting just in the right places, and at just the right times, he takes advantage of every drop of water that collects beneath the surface. "If rain comes," he says softly, "the crops will be good. But there is so much trouble. . . ."

Hopis talk a lot about trouble these days. There's the severe drought that has stricken the Southwest, a consequence, Hopis say, of white man's disrespect to mother earth. There is dissension within the villages, and between the generations, that worries many Hopi elders. Most disturbing of all is what is happening on Black Mesa, just to the north of the Hopis' villages and farms. Here the Peabody Coal company has flattened roads, brought in steam shovels, drilled wells for slurry and begun digging out the largest strip-mine in the world, selling the coal to a consortium of power companies who burn it to produce electricity for Los Angeles, Phoenix and other booming cities of the Southwest. Part of the Hopis' fear is that the strip-mining operation will upset the delicate water tables that have sustained their desert farms for nearly a millennium. Beyond this is a deeper concern that what is being done now to Black Mesa is merely the culmination of decades of white man's foolishness – for much too long, Hopis say, we have been cutting up the earth, destroying her innards, and grievously upsetting the harmony of living things. This process, they are afraid, will lead not only to the destruction of the Hopis' way of life, but to the death of us all.

Understanding the Hopis isn't easy. They use none of the scientific terms we are accustomed to, but speak almost mystically, with the wisdom of a people whose survival in a barren desert has quite literally depended upon harmony with the elements. In the Hopi religion, which is inseparable from their daily lives, all things – including the earth – are alive. Massau'u, the Great Spirit, gave to the Hopis the responsibility of protecting life, warning them that the task would not be easy. Dances and ceremonies would be necessary to keep living things in balance, to insure that rain would come forth and that crops would bloom. It would also be necessary to live humbly, taking from mother earth no more than was needed, and always giving to her as well as taking.

In accordance with their religion the Hopis have for centuries been "decidedly pacific in character, opposed to all wars, quite honest and very industrious," as the first US Indian agent in the Southwest reported in 1849. (The Selective Service System ruled several years ago that any Hopi who so desires may automatically be classified as a conscientious objector.) They have shunned competitiveness and the urge for power and wealth. Village leaders have labored in the fields and shared the same living standards as all other Hopis.

Still, many Hopis believe they have failed in their historic task, for they have not protected the earth from the ravages of others. Three times before, according to Hopi myth, the world has been destroyed because greed and war got out of hand. Each time Massau'u gave man another chance, and each time man again went astray. Now we are living in the fourth

This is the second of a two-part series on Indians of the Southwest.

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world, and it may well be the last. "The prophecy says that there will come a time of much destruction," says John Lansa. "This is the time. The prophecy says there will be paths in the sky. The paths are airplanes. There will be cobwebs in the air. These are the power lines. Great ashes will be dumped on cities and there will be destruction. These are the atom bombs America dropped on Hiroshima. The prophecy says men will travel to the moon and stars and this will cause disruption. It is bad that spacemen brought things back from the moon. That is very bad."

Not all of the 6000 Hopis agree with John Lansa. For the better part of a century the tribe has been split into feuding factions – the so-called Progressives favoring adoption of many white man's ways, the Traditionals holding firmly to the ancient path. In 1906 Traditionals and Progressives in Oraibi fell into a dispute over whether Hopi children should be allowed to attend US government schools. A pushing match was arranged to resolve the quarrel, with villagers of each persuasion deployed on opposite sides of a line. After several hours the Progressives proved to be the stronger pushers, so the Traditionals packed up and founded a new village, Hotevilla, a few miles to the north. Shortly thereafter US Army troops arrived in Hotevilla, snatched away Hopi children to government boarding schools and imprisoned village leaders who resisted.

Three years ago Hotevilla itself divided over the issue of electricity. Progressives, backed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, called in the Arizona Public Service Company; Traditionals threw themselves in front of the company's trucks. In the end the Traditionals prevailed, and Hotevilla remains one of three Hopi villages without electric power.

Equally divisive was the issue of political organization. Hopi villages had for centuries been self-governing city-states, with no central authority over the tribe. This was unsatisfactory to the federal government, which found it difficult to deal with such a diffused power structure. A Hopi constitution was drawn up by the BIA in 1935, under which each village would send representatives to a Tribal Council. Progressives welcomed the constitution and have dominated the Tribal Council ever since. Traditionals simply ignored it, claiming that the Hopis had never been defeated by the Americans, had never signed a treaty, and should not recognize the US government. Several Hopi villages still refuse to send delegates to the Tribal Council, and most *kikmongwis* refuse to certify Council delegates, as the constitution requires.

The forces working against the Traditionals today are stronger than ever. There are, of course, the old menaces – BIA schools, Christian missionaries, and electricity (which brings in TV and "ties you into the white man's system"). Now comes the strip-mining of Black Mesa, which not only threatens the Hopis' farms and livestock, and thus their economic independence from the white man, but also makes a mockery of their sacred responsibility to protect the earth. In addition, Peabody's contract for Hopi land, coal and water brings to the Tribal Council about $1 million a year – an insignificant amount from Peabody's standpoint, but more than enough to tip the Hopi balance of power irretrievably in favor of the Progressives.

So, in desperation, the traditional Hopis have appealed to the white man's government, a government they do not trust. Last month 62 spiritual leaders and *kikmongwis*, including Mina and John Lansa, filed suit in federal court, alleging that the contract between Peabody Coal and the Tribal Council was unlawfully approved by the Secretary of the Interior. (Among other things, the suit contends that the Tribal Council which signed the lease was illegally constituted, since it lacked a majority of members certified by the village *kikmongwis*.) Attached to the legal arguments was a short statement to the American people: "We, the Hopi religious leaders, have watched as the white man has destroyed his lands, his water and his air. The white man has made it harder and harder for us to maintain our traditional ways and religious life. Now – for the first time – we have decided to intervene actively in the white man's courts to prevent the final devastation. We should not have had to go this far, but our words have not been heeded. This might be the last chance. . . . The hour is already late."

Driving west from Oraibi, along a highway flooded by power lines, one is struck by a sense of irony and tragedy. A small but proud people, with the oldest intact culture in the United States, is being overrun – not by force of arms, not by drought or disease, not by the blandishments of schoolteachers or priests, but by white America's insatiable appetite for electric toothbrushes and air-conditioned buildings that are permanently locked closed. Hopi culture is perfectly capable of absorbing certain forms of progress; most Traditionals, for example, use bottled gas for lighting and refrigeration, drive automobiles and possess transistor radios. Education, too, is increasingly seen by younger Hopis not as a threat to traditional values but as a means for acquiring the knowledge necessary to protect ancient ways. The kind of progress Hopis cannot absorb is that which makes them dependent upon white man's jobs or welfare, destroys their attachment to the earth and profanes their religion – precisely the kind of progress America now seems determined to force upon them. The tragedy lies not only in our readiness to commit cultural genocide, but in our deafness – our inability to listen to a people who have been around a lot longer than we have, and who may know something we don't know.

Peter Barnes

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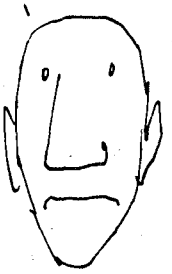
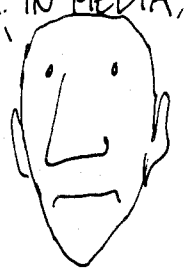
JULES FEIFFER

S.D.S. STEALS SECRET PAPERS FROM HARVARD.

HARVARD IS EMBARRASSED BY SENSATIONAL DISCLOSURES.



REVOLUTIONARIES STEAL SECRET PAPERS FROM F.B.I. IN MEDIA, PA.



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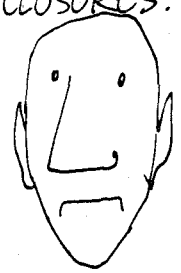

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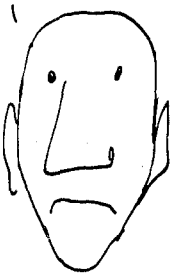

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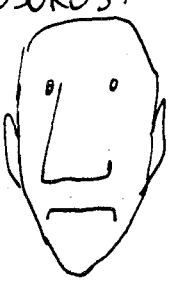

IN A COLD WAR SOCIETY IF YOU WANT LIES-

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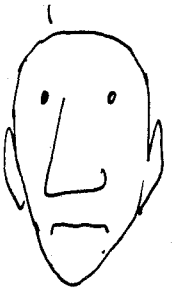

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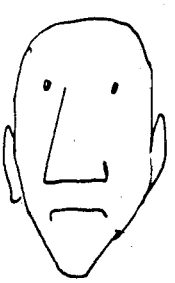

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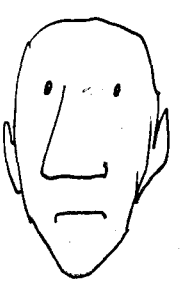

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Robert Brustein on Theater

Lenny

by Julian Barry
Music by Tom O'Horgan
(Brooks Atkinson)

Add to your collection of conspiracy theories the proposition that a secret agreement exists between the Justice Department and the entertainment industry – the one committed to creating a fixed quota of judicial martyrs, and the other to selling plays about them to a comfortably indignant audience. As supporting evidence for this theory, take note of how frequently we have been scandalized, in recent seasons, by the theatricalized legal hassles of the Berrigans, the Rosenbergs, Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin, and J. Robert Oppenheimer. Next year, if the conspiracy holds, we may confidently expect a rock musical on the subject of the Pentagon Papers, brought to Broadway by the lucky producer who managed to get an option on the trial of Daniel Ellsberg.

I flatter myself that this notion might have appealed to Lenny Bruce, and that he might have spun a routine around it. For it was Bruce who taught us to see all of American life as a venal extension of show business, with politics, religion, justice, even history itself, functioning as facades for commercial exploitation. To Bruce, the Church was a racket to sell luminescent crucifixes; politicians were created to order by talent agencies; and the judicial system provided the best opportunities available for showmanship (Bruce's obsessive ambition, during his own legal troubles, was to do a stand-up act before the Supreme Court). How ironic, then, that Bruce should ultimately become a martyr to his own vision – first being victimized by the same legal system he lampooned, and now, by the very entertainment mill he so loathed and reviled. To discover Lenny Bruce cast as the posthumous hero of a new socko play with music at the Brooks Atkinson theater is to find our conspiracy theory further confirmed, since Broadway has effectively completed a process of falsification initiated by the courts.

The name of this item is *Lenny*, and I must confess I found it a pretty unsavory affair. Apparently designed as a tribute to Bruce, the play tries to combine an appreciation of his talent with episodes from his life, including his marriage, his nightclub career, his trial on charges of obscenity, and his death from an overdose of heroin. But although the work is meant to be a testimonial to Bruce's struggle for free expression, *Lenny* manages to assimilate its hero into another tradition entirely, making him acceptable to audiences who would never have liked him, and unrecognizable to those who did. Many familiar Bruce bits are represented in *Lenny*, borrowed from *The Essential Lenny Bruce* and delivered by a glossy young actor named Cliff Gorman. But something very odd – and very unhealthy – has happened in the transfer to the stage, with the result that Bruce, for the first time in my experience of his work, actually does begin to seem (What is the word?)... a little... dirty.

The fault lies not with the actor, who does an energetic if somewhat uninflected impersonation of the comedian (Gorman's energy somehow never reaches his eyes). Nor can it be attributed to the playwright, since Julian Barry's text, while clumsy, at least tries to remain faithful to Bruce's spirit. The person responsible, I am afraid, is the director, Tom O'Horgan, whose irrepressible theatrical antics continue to dominate and distort all his projects. This particular evening, for example, intermittently features a parade of witchdoctors, lepers, and creatures looking like abominable snowmen, the latter dressed in burlap with strings hanging from their noses like snot, who cavort about the stage playing wierd musical instruments. Then Bruce is permitted a feverish dream sequence peopled by some of the creatures of his imagination (Eichmann carrying a glass booth, Hitler on enormous stilts) who seem to have wandered in by mistake from the Bread and Puppet theatre. The stripper whom Bruce marries remains practically naked throughout most of the play (even when Bruce brings her to meet his mother), and when they first make love, we are invited to observe their pre- and post-coital play, including an extended bit of mimed cunnilingus. Virtually all of Bruce's solo routines have turned into big production numbers with large casts, while the "Religions Inc." bit now features two muscular long-haired hippies (apparently on loan from *Hair*) who play Moses and Jesus totally naked. Even Bruce is forced to participate in the obligatory O'Horgan nude sequence, when a trolley tracks out of the mouth of a stone head of Nixon (apparently responsible for Bruce's death though he wasn't elected until two years after) revealing his naked body draped over a toilet bowl.

Now Bruce, for all his audacity and daring, was not a sexual exhibitionist, never performed a pornographic routine, and rarely felt a strong compulsion to expose his genitals to the public (though he did allow himself to be photographed once on a latrine). His comedy, as a matter of fact, can best be characterized in the same way Judge Woolsey once described Joyce's *Ulysses* – as more emetic than erotic. It is true that Bruce's language, for which he was indicted, did involve a generous use of four- and ten-letter words; but his obscenities were designed less to arouse prurient interest than to desanctify ritualized objects and to deflate hypocritical ideals. To surround Bruce with camp pyrotechnics, nude charades, Expressionistic Busby Berkeley bits, La Mama phantasmagoria, and other fruits of O'Horgan's over-ripe imagination, is not only to betray Bruce's lean, skeptical Jewish spirit, but, worse, to identify him with a Puritan tradition (camp and pornography being inverted forms of Puritanism) which he despised.

To be sure, there is one way in which he is linked to this tradition. As the script of *Lenny* makes excessively clear (Bruce's routines are often followed by longwinded descriptions of their redeeming social value), the comedian's doomed and poignant conflict with the law over free expression ultimately helped to lay the groundwork for our present-day unprecedented cultural and artistic freedom. And it is undoubtedly true that without the example of Lenny Bruce, there would be no *Oh! Calcutta* or *Che*, no X-rated films, no *Futz* or *Tom Paine* or *Hair* – indeed, no *Lenny*. On the other hand, there are those (possibly including Bruce himself if he were still alive) who might not be so eager to count this among his highest achievements, since despite the obvious social importance of an uncensored theatre, the products of this development have

(Continued on page 34)

STANLEY KAUFFMANN *is in Germany. His column will resume next week.*

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A "Fashionable" Poet?

Collected Poems by James Wright

(Wesleyan University Press; $7.95)

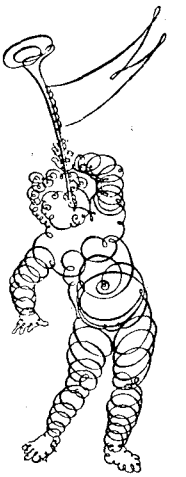
The presiding genius loci here is midwestern: the poet's native Ohio, Minnesota, the Dakotas, figuring largely in his work. We have not encountered the spirit of those places so unmistakably for more than fifty years, in that far-off time when it was hailed by Masters and Sandburg. Now, of course, it speaks in a changed voice. In any event, its dominating presence gives these pages a mild exoticism, as well as a certain refreshment, for readers accustomed to the performance of Pound, Eliot, Yeats and Stevens. (It is odd to reflect that Pound's earliest impressions were of Idaho and Eliot's of Missouri.) Although James Wright is familiar with foreign regions and cultures, those he seems to have known most intimately find a relatively small place in his work. The lyrics that he is concerned to render into English verse – for a portion of his new volume is devoted to translation – are predominantly Spanish. There are also versions of two or three lyrics by Goethe and several of poems by his utterly different compatriot, Georg Trakl. I do not recall having found here a translation of, or even a reference to, any Japanese poem, although Wright apparently spent some time in Japan. There are lines that he addresses to Po Chü-I, the ninth century Chinese poet whom Arthur Waley made veritably one of our ancestors. Not seldom Wright's tone is reminiscent of ancient Chinese poetry, however plainly and solidly American the substance of his work is. Among the links with those old Chinese poems is the frequent evocation of the rural scene, as also the accent on *lacrimae rerum*, which were the same for the Chinese of some eleven centuries ago as they had been for Virgil's contemporaries and as they are for us today. What is characteristic of Chinese poetry in this regard is the note of sad serenity, a resignation attuned to irony no less than to pathos. This sounds in Wright's poems, too. Again, there are the easy allusions to the refuge of drunkenness that recur in Chinese poems and that appear as often and matter-of-factly on Wright'spages.

These pages present poets other than Po Chü-I in an epigraph or an allusion, affording the pleasure of recognition. It is the keener when the name is of one who, like H. Phelps Putnam and more specially Hugh MacDiarmid, has earned wider recognition than he has received. In at least one instance Wright recalls a poet distant from him in time and temperament. This is the short piece – 13 lines – with the long title: "Depressed by a Book of Bad Poetry, I Walk Toward an Unused Pasture and Invite the Insects to Join Me." One imagines that Wright had not even a passing thought of Keats's sonnet "On the Grasshopper and the Cricket," but it is inevitable that his reader should be pleasantly reminded of it.

The creatures move easily into Wright's lines, a foil, even when they are sorely beset, for the tormented lives of the men and women who figure there. The deprived, the stricken, are present in all their poverty and loneliness. Wright faces up to what they suffer, in helpless rebellion, or in mere helplessness. "I speak of flat defeat/In a flat voice." In another poem he confronts the "old men . . ./Hungry and frightened by namelessness . . ./Lashed blind by the wind, dreaming/Of suicide in the river." And asks: "How does the city keep lists of its fathers/Who have no names?" Several poems have to do with the least of the Americans, the Amerindians. In one, ostensibly about a blue heron, he recalls a legend about one of the Nazis' victims, who sought out the man who drove the truck to the place where the allotted Jews were killed and buried, saying: "'You! Schmo! When you pick me up tomorrow,/Put me on top of the stack,/I've got asthma.'" An outstanding feature of these poems is the mingling of brutality and tenderness, the tenderness issuing out of horror at the fates that deny it to the masses of human beings.

The vocabulary is simple, the diction straightforward. Wright's ventures into surrealism are not as effective as the rest of his work. Some poems, like some titles, are longer than they need be. He uses few metaphors, but when they occur they are notable, as where he writes: "In a field of sunlight between two pines/The droppings of last year's horses/Blaze up into golden stones." The later work is almost free of rhymed and metred lines, though sometimes Wright allows himself these disregarded devices. In a note appended to a recent anthology he refers to "the rhymed iambics which no fashionable poet would be caught dead writing these days." The comment has an odd ring to it, simply because Wright's book does not sound like the work of one aiming to be a "fashionable poet." On the contrary, it reads like that of a man whose ambition is to write as truly and as well as he can, out of his deepest and liveliest experiences, no matter how the literary Beau Brummels are dressing their verses. Surely, whatever turn the fashions may take, he will continue to do so.

Babette Deutsch



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Sweet Violins in the Word House

A Disrupted History: The New Left and the New Capitalism by Greg Calvert and Carol Neiman

(Random House; $5.95)

Right after World War II George Orwell published an essay, *Politics and the English Language*, that has been much prized by English teachers ever since, and largely ignored by everyone else. In it he took out after imprecision, staleness of imagery, pretentious diction, and other common characteristics of the language of our political leaders, famous scientists and even English professors, characteristics produced by foolish thoughts and in turn productive of foolish thoughts. What Orwell didn't quite say was that it was largely his political enemies who were producing the foolishness. He tried hard to find *all* political writing bad, but he concluded that exceptions to the badness were to be found where "the writer is some sort of rebel, expressing his private opinions and not a 'party line.'" Orwell was himself such a rebel, and so his discovery that party lines cause the trouble may be taken as sour grapes by those who know and dislike his political history. Yet what he said in the mid-forties that was then peculiarly applicable to the old left seems still so true in the early seventies of the New Left that perhaps his political prejudices can now be discounted: political writing *is* as bad as ever, and it is particularly bad when it is radical party-line writing. Just as in Orwell's time, when one turns to the language of the revolutionary left "one often has a curious feeling that one is not watching a live human being but some kind of dummy."

My text for today is a New Left document whose authors, aware of what they describe as the "vulgar mechanistic Marxism" in the Left's past, try to be independent of party rhetoric, and fail. What is interesting to me, admittedly a sort of liberal and therefore one of the enemy, is that the authors' strong reaction against some of the verbal and ideological machinery of both the Old and New Left has produced merely more of what they profess to be reacting against. Where the leftist politicoes of Orwell's time talked of *bestial atrocities, iron heel, bloodstained tyranny,* and *free peoples of the world,* Greg Calvert and Carol Neiman talk of the *military-industrial complex, American fascism, revolutionary consciousness, meaningful relationships* and the rest with a thoughtless verbal glibness that is not redeemed by their prefatory "note on language" in which they reject such conventional terms as *anarchist* and *socialist* and aspire politically to a "community in which each individual could say: 'I am a lover in a society of friends.'" Orwell might have been rendered momentarily speechless by that verbal gambit but he would have found himself in familiar territory as soon as the book begins. It professes to be a history, but contains hardly a page of exposition of any actual event. Instead we are treated to stretches of theory sandwiched between editorials against the system. In an unusually touching passage near the end the authors describe with annoyance an SDS convention full of interminable "debating about a lot of paper resolutions," but the sad thing is that they are themselves full of debate and paper resoluting rather than matter. They argue against liberalism on the one hand, and against the "Leninist-Maoist cadres" on the other, but their words and thoughts seldom touch the ground. Here is a characteristic sentence:

> The disastrous consequences of this Leninist opposition to libertarian ideals became most apparent in the neocapitalist period when the increasingly totalitarian nature of social control made the powerlessness of the great majority of men a fertile ground for fascist ideology.

I count eleven abstract nouns here, with about the same number of grandly cloudy adjectives modifying them, and the whole works gummed together – the phrase is Orwell's – by no less than seven prepositions. It is just the sort of sentence Orwell couldn't stand, "long strips of words which have already been set in order by somebody else." The antidote for it (not the "anecdote," as the authors aver, on page 17) would seem to be the living and loving they recommend rather than the theoretical politicking they indulge in.

Another common result of their theorizing is a sentence composed of a two-sie, or even several two-sies. A two-sie is held together by "either-or," "both-and" or some other dialectically souled connective, and it tends to be quite grand, like: "The basis of revolutionary movement is the instinct to live – Eros – as against the instince to die (Thanatos)." It also tends to be trite: "In the civil rights movement, the deep contradiction between the rhetoric of American freedom and the reality of American oppression was laid bare." And always it is vaguely euphonious, since as Orwell pointed out a common source of verbal imprecision is not wanting to let a sentence drop, suddenly, with a bump. Phineas T. Barnum himself would have been proud of the musically balanced padding of two-sies in the following sentence:

> The realization that the New Left was not an isolated phenomenon unique to the United States, but rather a specific historical movement common to all capitalist societies, was forced on us by the independent but similar development of student movements from Berkeley to Berlin and from Paris to Tokyo.

When words get rolling along good like that, neither speaker nor listener needs to think much. The sound is pleasant, familiar, reassuring (snooze snooze), and before one knows it the day, or the book, is over. I read on and on in *A Disrupted History* lazily anticipating specificity, and suddenly I was at the end and nothing had happened; the authors' program for the New Left was of a piece with their prose: it turned into soft music and went out the window. A long term program must be developed – but what program? Campus struggles must be linked "organically rather than mechanically to other sectors of society" – but by what organs? And the New Left "must begin to make

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its vision of the liberated human community explicit" – in the *next* book? These are not solutions but lyrics, and while solutions admittedly come hard, imagining non-solutions to *be* solutions will only make them come harder. The authors are full of a sadness, which seems justified, of what is happening to the New Left, and they retain a faith, which is admirable in its earnestness, in our capacity as a nation to renew the radical surge that has slithered off recently; but they are too full of the fuzzy ideological music that surrounds them to do a lick of work in the building of the future community they envisage, or even, for that matter, to spend any time envisaging it. Did not the Lord give us eyes to *see*? Nothing is seen here. There is no imagery, nothing solid, nothing tangible. Truly theirs is a revolution for some country none of us knows, a country not made of earth and sticks and people, but of hundreds of gummy abstractions.

Reed Whittemore

Notable

The Colony
by John Bowers

(E.P. Dutton; $6.95)

An article in *Life* in the early fifties started it. James Jones had written *From Here to Eternity* at a sort of boy scout camp for writers where everybody got up early, did pushups and climbed on their typewriters. A woman named Lowney Handy was in charge; Jones owed all to her.

John Bowers, a young Tennesseean, read *Life* and wrote Lowney Handy, and soon he was installed at the camp too, pounding out words. *The Colony* is a report of his experience there, chiefly notable for its descriptions of Mrs. Handy herself and her circus-trainer views of how to make mere people into novelists. For one thing, copy reams of the words of other novelists. For another, take an enema when you feel bad. For a third, forget about Proust and get down to the nitty gritty. Apparently Mrs. Handy undertook to *read* most of the words produced at her camp – which itself is a marvel – and she also undertook to sell them, when she liked them, in New York. A characteristic Handyan critique: "I want everyone here to know one thing. George is the best writer I've got. . . . He's turning in work now that puts every one of you to

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shame. He's a hundred percent better than you guys who've been to college and who have been with me for years. . . . Of all the people who have come to this Colony, he is the One Who Most Reminds Me of the Early Jim Jones."

Lowney Handy wanted to keep her charges free of marriage and other traps out in the big world, but she fought a losing battle. John Bowers went back into the world like the rest, and her last letter to him ended, touchingly: "Do you think I recall anyone who was ever in the camp?. . . Not a soul. If I had to give a remembered picture of James Jones to the cops, I sure as hell couldn't do it. That was another life. THE HANDY COLONY IS NO MORE. I died. Now see if you can write. Love and kisses. L." Then a month later she did die. Her character as presented by Bowers has something of the pathos of Arthur Miller's Willie Loman, needing at the last a kind of minimal human caring for, and not getting it.

President Seven
by John Summerskill

(World; $7.95)

Since S.I. Hayakawa has emerged as something of a backsliding reactionary black hat villain as President of San Francisco State College his predecessor, John Summerskill, might be expected to have been the opposite – permissive, liberal, a friend of the student idealism, a foe of Reaganism, in all a proponent of the forces Hayakawa was brought in to combat. And Summerskill does appear in this volume as a moderate gunned down by those who wanted more police and sooner: the book is the story of *how* he was gunned down, and it contains detailed reporting of some of the high moments, such as the televised trustees meeting where the investigation of Summerskill was voted that led him, even when officially exonerated, to resign. But the chief impression the book is apt to leave upon an outsider is unfortunately not of beleaguered liberalism combatting Reagan, but simply of a beleaguered nice guy fighting more forces than one nice guy ought to fight. The complexities of the different campus factions, mixed in with state and trustee politicking, add up to heavy going, particularly since much of the detail seems present largely to justify the author's conduct. College presidents have a right to lick their wounds, and deserve more sympathy than mere mortals for what they have had to suffer lately; but they should beware of writing books until they have travelled far from the books' occasions. How far? Summerskill wrote some of this in Ethiopia, which was not far enough.

White Terror: The Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy and Southern Reconstruction
by Allen W. Trelease

(Harper and Row, $15.00)

The North won the Civil War, but by no means was that victory the final word for the South's whites. In the spring of 1866 some white men from Tennessee got together and formed a pleasant social club. They dressed up a bit strangely, did some practical joking, enjoyed one another's company. They called their organization the Ku Klux Klan. A year later the Klan was larger and had taken on broader functions. Men rode at night, bullied Negroes, declared themselves protectors of the white South. By 1868 the Klan was something to be reckoned with all over the South, not *the* voice of the region's white people, but an influential one – a reminder of sorts to the rest of the nation that if things were to change in states like Alabama and Mississippi, continuing pressure would have to come from Washington, D.C. But the North proved unwilling to enforce its will, year in and year out; and anyway, the North had thoroughly mixed feelings. The federal government acted hesitantly and equivocally in the face of rising Klan-inspired violence, and the result was more and more boldness and viciousness on the part of the increasingly brutish members of the organization.

Now a professor of history from North Carolina has written a book which tells us just how influential the Klan became in the South. Allen Trelease has written a long and carefully documented account. He moves the reader along from state to state – and each Southern state, one begins to gather, had its own particular political climate, not to mention social and cultural tradition. Because its author has a clear head and has a gift for narrative writing, *White Terror* possesses an extraordinary balance of scholarship and readability. Though we are never lectured at or given self-righteous sermons, we are taught a few lessons that go beyond the strict chronicle of the Klan's emergence as a widespread and intimidating force – and one which was useful to conservative forces in the North as well as to scheming politicians in the South. Again and again one comes to see how unnecessary it was that the South, that this nation put up with the likes of those Klansmen. If blacks were terrorized and murdered, whites were also frightened and made ashamed and humiliated. True, large numbers of whites were stirred up, given the terrible satisfactions that hate can provide for desperate and vulnerable people. Yet, never did the Klan take over; never did it dominate the white South; and never would such vigilantes have gained even the importance they did manage to obtain had the Congress and the President promptly taken a firm (and utterly constitutional) stand. Instead men of great power allowed themselves to procrastinate and come up with excuses for what was their timidity at best, and often enough their narrow self-interest or even downright malevolence. So it was; and so it still is.

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Correspondence

Vonnegut Awry?

Sirs:

Charles Thomas Samuels's critique of Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. in your June 12 issue seems directed more toward depreciating Vonnegut's admirers than examining his works. It is fine to view a writer as a social phenomenon, but can we legitimately attack him because we oppose the cultural influences supporting him?

First, Mr. Samuels objects that Vonnegut plays only with the wisdom of his predecessors. Even were that true, is that objectionable? Shall we condemn the artist who tells us that war is bad because we have heard it said before and praise the one who tells us war is good because the thought is original? Is, say, Picasso's *Guernica* reduced because painters have been conveying the agony of warfare on canvas for centuries.

Yet Vonnegut does say original things. Mr. Samuels merely fails to see them. For example, Mr. Samuels complains that Vonnegut's Bokononism (and why does Mr. Samuels constantly refer to "Bokon" instead of "Bokonon" – hasn't he read the book?) is a philosophy that merges good and evil, true and false, and eventually real and unreal. There are not many writers who have come to such a clear rejection of futile moralizing.

Furthermore, Mr. Samuels's analysis of Vonnegut's characters is completely awry. Are we to believe that, in *Cat's Cradle*, Dr. Hoenniker is "a square who is adjusted to society" pitted melodramatically "against a superman who, though not impeccable, tends to improve his adversary" and that the superman is Bokonon? Dr. Hoenniker dies years before the book opens; he is in fact so ill-adjusted that he must be spoon-fed by his daughter and rarely communicates with anyone. Bokonon never meets Dr. Hoenniker or virtually any of the other characters in the novel. For the sake of a gross generalization, Mr. Samuels has totally ignored the book he means to be discussing; he might with equal wisdom tell us that *Crime and Punishment* is nothing more than a detective novel.

Mr. Samuels accuses Vonnegut of arrogantly assuming the sympathy of his audience. Of course Vonnegut does. All satirists eventually recruit listeners who agree with them; it is a rare person who can find humor in a lampoon of which he is the target. Yet Vonnegut did not corral a group of listeners and force himself upon them, he simply spoke his message and those who wanted to hear heard.

Finally, Mr. Samuels accuses Vonnegut of creating palpably absurd situations that are not even satirical. That is not so. Is Mr. Samuels so stodgy that he cannot finding anything vaguely humorous in the picture of a scientist so oblivious to reality that he tips his own wife? Who cares if the situation is so clearly unreal that it escapes the realms of possibility? Vonnegut persistently uses satire that is far-ranging in its conception. No one with a junior high school education could believe in Vonnegut's ice-nine as even a plausible extension of a possible chemical condition. But as a satirical equivalent for the atomic bomb or global pollution, ice-nine is effective.

Mr. Samuels's conclusion that Vonnegut's novels are adolescent literature leaves one fearing that "adolescent", like "fascist" or "romantic," is quickly becoming a catch-word to use indiscriminately when knocking a work.

David Bruce Goldin
Mahopac, N.Y.

Poverty at Home

Sirs:

As a member of the Maryland Task Force on Welfare Reform, may I comment on the article by Melville Ulmer ("The Family Assistance Plan: Work and Welfare", *NR*, July 3, 1971.

H.R. 1 (Social Security Amendments of 1971, approved in June by the House of Representatives) while containing some beneficial provisions such as a minimum benefit level also contains a number of punitive and regressive measures. Some examples of these are:

(1) Beginning in 1974, mothers of three year olds should be required to register for work

(2) The maximum benefit is $3600. A family of ten would receive the same as a family of eight. In addition, a family of four receives the same amount as an elderly couple, $2400.

(3) Food stamps would be "cashed out". Recipients would no longer receive the bonus in purchasing power for food.

(4) States have the option to impose a one year residency requirement even

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though the Supreme Court has declared such a ruling unconstitutional.

(5) Payments can be made to a third person other than the member of the family as "to best carry out the purposes of the title." This robs the family of the dignity to administer its own funds.

(6) The bill denies recipients rights and due process protections guaranteed under present law.

I was shocked to see the article label Maryland as one of the states that benefits would be substantially raised. The maximum benefit in Maryland today is $2400. In addition a family receiving this is eligible for food stamps which adds a bonus of $660 to their purchasing power. Under H.R.1 food stamps are "cashed out". Maryland recipients would loose this benefit they now receive under current law.

While it is true that "wages on the jobs" could not be less than the higher of the prevailing or applicable minimum wage or the federal minimum wage, it is also true that registered persons would be required to accept work unless the "wages are less than an hourly rate of ¾ of the highest Federal minimum wage. (currently this is $1.20 an hour under present law) Working for $1.20 an hour would bring in $2400 a year before taxes. According to the chart presented in Mr. Ulmer's article, such a family would still be eligible for $1280 in assistance payments.

We are only kidding ourselves if we try and sell this plan "from welfare to workfare."

It is true that the able-bodied on welfare want to work. Of the 12,880,000 on public assistance (January 1971, HEW figures), 2,080,000 are aged; 1,030,000 are blind or disabled and 7,100,000 are children. Of the 12,880,000 then 2,670,000 are mothers. For these 200,000 public service jobs are provided. I am skeptical about the reality of employing these two million mothers at a time when unemployment is approximately 6 per cent. Training persons for jobs that do not exist will only increase frustration.

Finally, the National Welfare Rights organization has proposed a $6500 (not $5500) adequate income benefit. While this figure may seem substantial, the costs to society that result from the current inadequacy of welfare grants are indeed substantial. . . . It seems that a society which provides substantial financial aid to its failing railroads, aircraft industries, oil industries and farmers could find an adequate way to help the 25 million Americans that are in poverty.

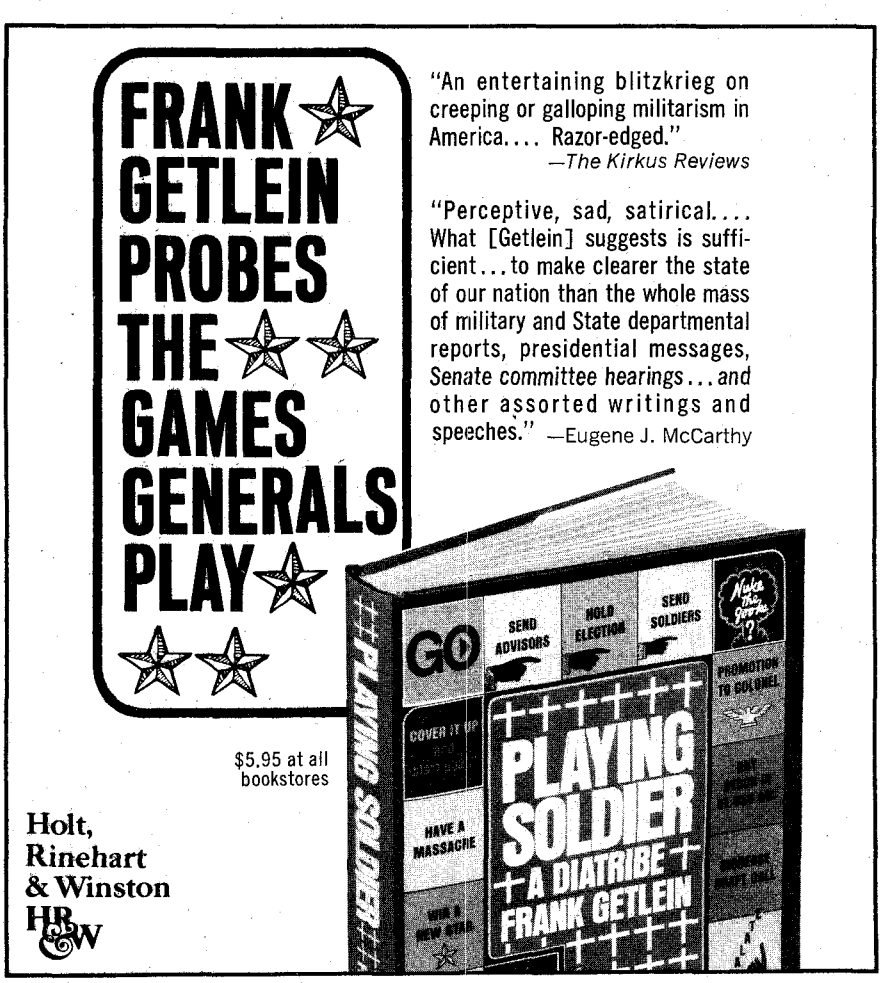
Sharon Nathanson
Maryland Task Force on Welfare Reform

Passage to China

Sirs:

Richard Dudman's article, "Waiting for That Visa to China" (*NR*, July 3) leaves inferences which are unfair to a number of persons, including myself, who are identified as tentative "delegation" leaders. The article creates the impression that such "delegation" leaders were recruited by offers of free passage to China in exchange for promoting the tour "chain-letter" fashion among their friends. As one of the prospective tour leaders named in the article, I received no such inducement and have assumed that all members of the tour would be expected to pay their way, unless sponsored by their own organizations.

Edward L. Ericson
Past President, American Ethical Union
Reform, Baltimore, Maryland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Notes on Contributors

Babette Deutsch *is the author of more than two dozen books of poetry, fiction and criticism. Her* Collected Poems *appeared in 1969.* John Seelye *teaches English at the University of Connecticut.* Richard Wilbur's *translation of Molière's* The School for Wives *will be published next month by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.*

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The Writer

In her room at the prow of the house
Where light breaks, and the windows are tossed with linden,
My daughter is writing a story.

I pause in the stairwell, hearing
From her shut door a commotion of typewriter-keys
Like a chain hauled over a gunwale.

Young as she is, the stuff
Of her life is a great cargo, and some of it heavy:
I wish her a lucky passage.

But now it is she who pauses,
As if to reject my thought and its easy figure.
A stillness greatens, in which

The whole house seems to be thinking,
And then she is at it again with a bunched clamor
Of strokes, and again is silent.

I remember the dazed starling
Which was trapped in that very room, two years ago;
How we stole in, lifted a sash

And retreated, not to affright it;
And how for a helpless hour, through the crack of the door,
We watched the sleek, wild, dark

And iridescent creature
Batter against the brilliance, drop like a glove
To the hard floor, or the desk-top,

And wait then, humped and bloody,
For the wits to try it again; and how our spirits
Rose when, suddenly sure,

It lifted off from a chair-back,
Beating a smooth course for the right window
And clearing the sill of the world.

It is always a matter, my darling,
Of life or death, as I had forgotten. I wish
What I wished you before, but harder.

RICHARD WILBUR

Brustein, *from page 26*

has demonstrated an extraordinary gift for translating whatever is dangerous, inaccessible, spikey, tough, and difficult into smooth entertainments suitable for easy consumption by Broadway audiences. He has exposed, in short, the secret alliance that exists now between the American avant-garde and middlebrow taste, between pornography and Puritanism, between the illusion of radicalism and the demands of the box office. It is, finally, with Mr. O'Horgan and his associates that our conspiracy theory begins to take on weight and thus far seemed more sensational than illuminating.

Ultimately, the greatest tribute that the creators of *Lenny* could have paid Bruce was to present him in all his freshness, uniqueness, and singularity: He was obviously one of the few performing geniuses of the postwar period. But to thank him for his pioneering work by assimilating him into our current opportunist conventions and vulgar theatrical fashions is to make gratitude indistinguishable from rancor. With *Lenny*, as with *Hair* before it, Tom O'Horgan validity, for it is they who invariably reduce every form of legitimate art and protest into harmless foodstuffs for the jaded palates of the radical chic.

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Inquest

Who killed Bruce, Lenny?
It was I, said the Needle,
So tiny and feeble,
I killed Bruce, Lenny.

Who caught his blood?
I did, said the Spoon,
By the light of the moon
I caught his blood.

Who saw him die?
We did, said the Crowd,
Laughing out loud
We watched him die.

Who'll dig his grave?
Me, said the Club-Owner,
I hate a loner,
Let me dig his grave.

Who'll make his shroud?
We will, cried the Jury,
Screaming in fury,
We'll sew his shroud.

Who'll be the priest?
I will, said the Judge
With an iron-hard grudge,
I'll play the priest.

Who'll beat the drum?
I will, said the D.A.,
Leading the way
I'll beat the drum.

Who'll be chief mourner?
I will, said the Agent,
For the usual percent
I'll be chief mourner.

Who'll carry the coffin?
Let me, said the Junky,
Me and my monkey
We'll carry the coffin.

Who'll toll the bell?
I will, said the State,
Both early and late
I'll ring the bell.

Who'll carve the stone?
I will, said the Cop:
This shit had to stop,
So I'll carve the stone.

Then the Prosecutor came,
in each hand a penny,
To close the dead eyes
of poor Bruce, Lenny.

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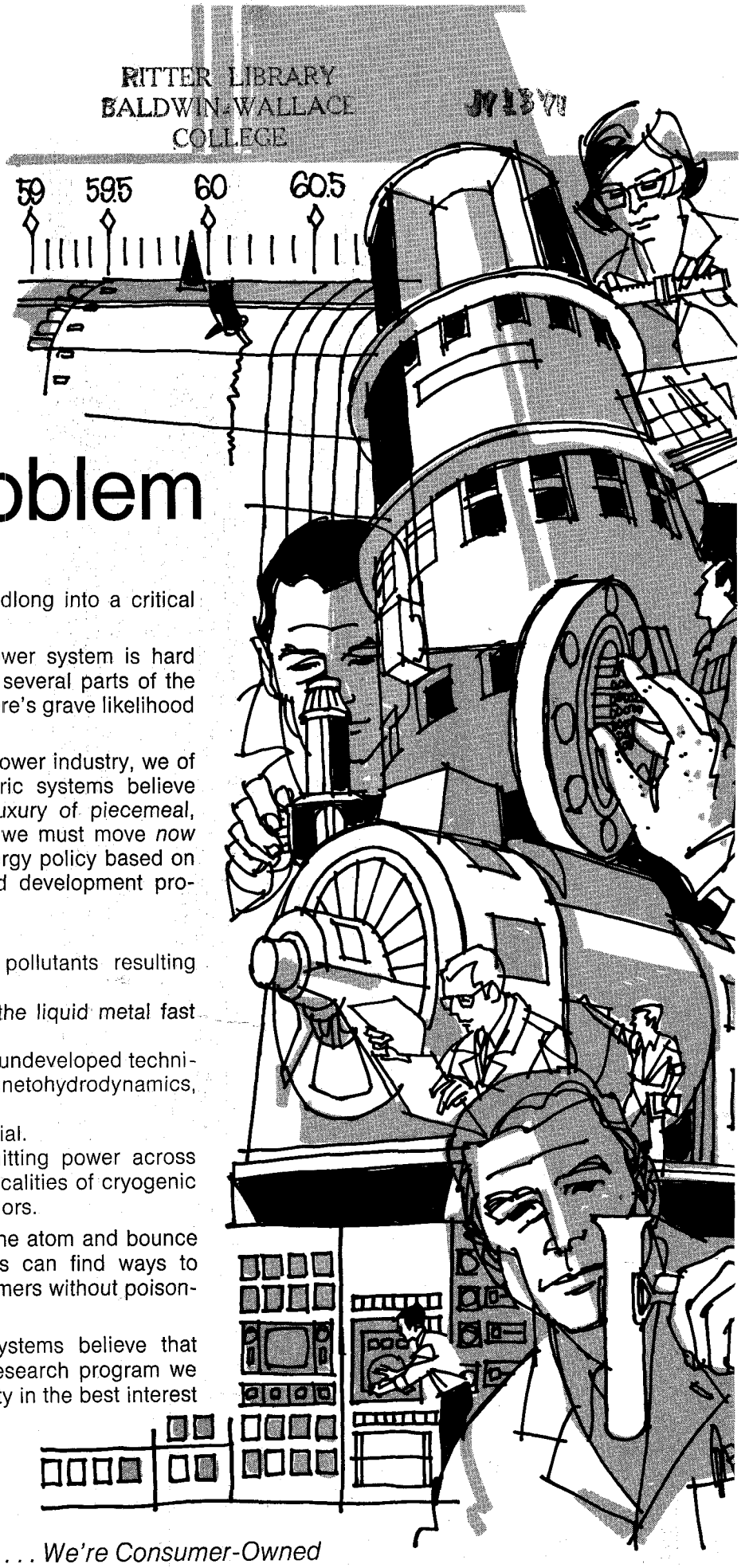

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